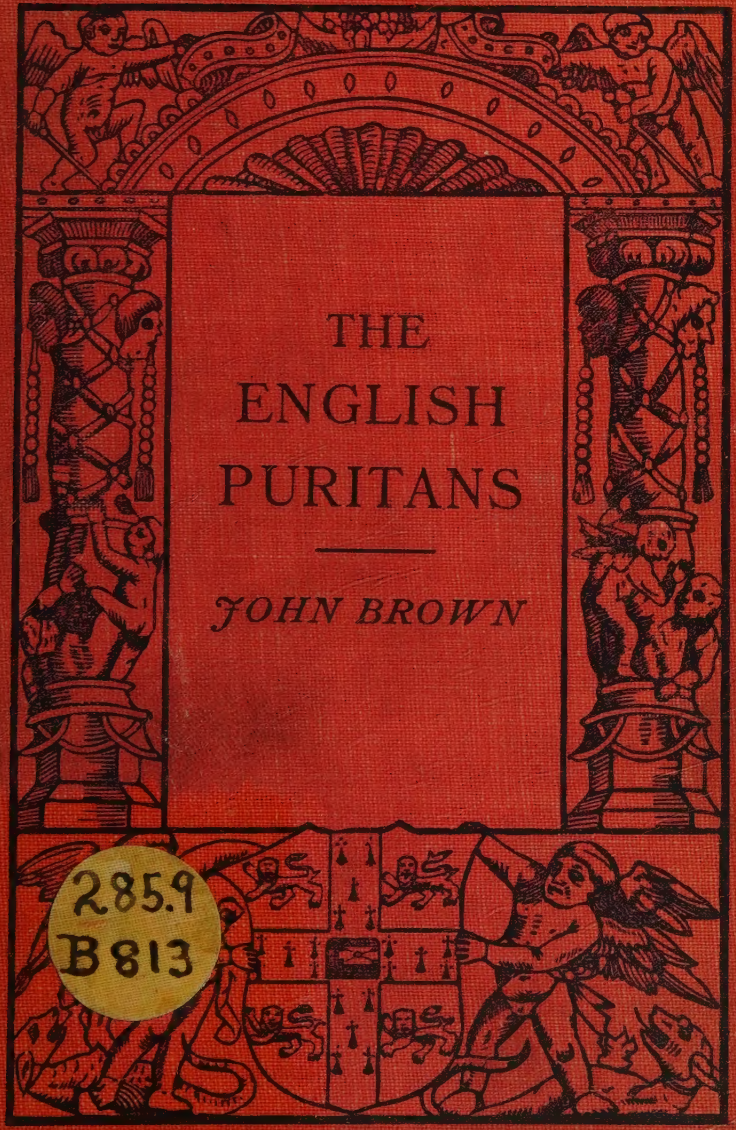

# THE ENGLISH PURITANS

JOHN BROWN

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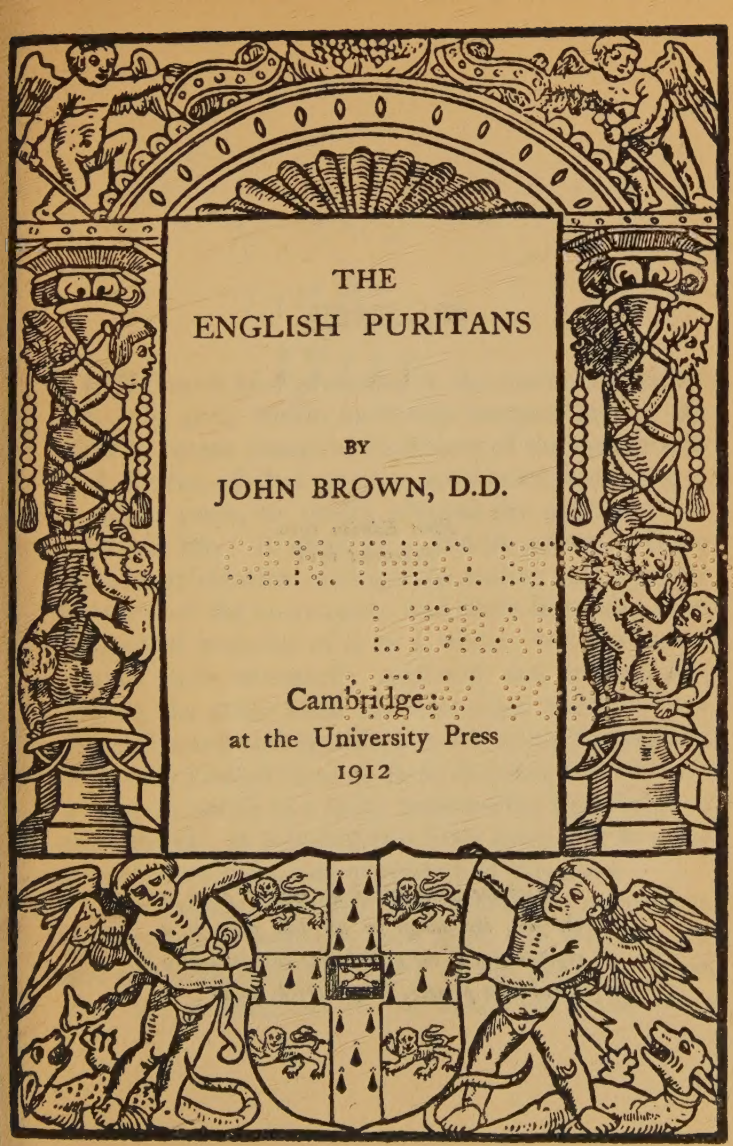

# THE ENGLISH PURITANS

BY

JOHN BROWN, D.D.

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# PREFACE

THE work here presented to the reader is intended to give, within moderate compass and in the light of recent research, the history of the rise, growth and decline of that puritan movement which, for a hundred years, so vitally affected the course of our national life. It aims at a middle course. There have been historical monographs dealing with separate portions of the movement; and there have also been connected histories of it as a whole; but the monographs were necessarily sectional and incomplete; and on the other hand the connected histories were too elaborate and therefore too lengthy for readers with only limited time at their disposal, but who yet wished to arrive at a fairly trustworthy knowledge of the subject. It is hoped this little book may to some extent meet the needs of readers of this class.

The subject is worthy of attention, for puritanism had important bearings both upon the religious life and the constitutional history of the nation. It was first of all religious in its character. The early

puritans had no political views, yet their religious opinions worked out to political results. Borgeaud has shewn that modern democracy is the child of the Reformation, not of the reformers. For in the Reformation the two levers used to break the authority of the Holy See were free enquiry and the priesthood of all believers; and these two principles contained in them the germs of the political revolution which has come to pass. For they made the community the visible centre of the Church, and the people the principal factor of social life. On these grounds the history of the English puritans deserves to be known from within and in such connected form as the necessary limitations of space will allow.

J. B.

HAMPSTEAD,
*June* 20, 1910.

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# I

## THE ORIGINS OF PURITANISM

PURITANISM, as a recognised descriptive term, came into use, Thomas Fuller tells us, about the year 1564. But as there were reformers before the Reformation, so there were puritans before that which has come to be regarded as in a special sense the puritan period. For puritanism was not so much an organised system as a religious temper and a moral force, and being such it could enter into combinations and alliances of varied kind. It may fairly be applied to Wycliffe and the Lollards as well as to the later protestant reformers; to Hooper and Latimer in the days of Edward VI as well as to Cartwright and Travers in those of Elizabeth; to some who remained within the pale of the English Church and to others who separated from it. The name was not confined to presbyterians and congregationalists, for there were bishops who may be described as distinctly puritan; nor was it to be identified with the Calvinistic system of doctrine, for Archbishop Whitgift, who was the most

resolute opponent of the puritans, was, as his Lambeth Articles shew, a believer in predestination in its extremest form. The term came also to have a political as well as an ecclesiastical significance. While in the sixteenth century it was descriptive of the men bent on carrying on the protestant Reformation to a further point, in the seventeenth century it became the recognised name of that party in the State which contended for the constitutional rights and liberties of the people as against the encroachments of the Crown.

And even yet we have not enumerated all possible applications. What an old writer calls 'this reproachful word puritan,' was applied scoffingly to men who were regarded as foolishly precise in the matter of forms and ceremonies; it was also applied seriously to some of the greatest names in our history and literature—to Cromwell and Milton, to Baxter and Bunyan. Then it was but a step from those who were thought to be needlessly precise as to forms of worship, to pass to men who were thought to be needlessly strict as to life and morals. Richard Baxter relates that his father was jeered at as a puritan, though a strict conformist to the Church and the Book of Common Prayer, because he read the Bible with his family on Sunday afternoons, and refused to join in the merry-makings then going on round the maypole which stood by the great tree

near his door. As was said by a writer of those days: 'In the mouth of a drunkard he is a puritan who refuseth his cups; in the mouth of a swearer he which feareth an oath; in the mouth of a libertine he who makes any scruple of common sins.'

Still, while the name thus varied in its applications with time and persons and the course of events, we discern at once a common element of characteristic sort running through all the variations. The fundamental idea of puritanism in all its manifestations was the supreme authority of Scripture brought to bear upon the conscience as opposed to an unenlightened reliance on the priesthood and the outward ordinances of the Church. The puritan, whether narrow or broad, mistaken or enlightened, seemed, to himself at least, to be aiming, not at singularity, but at obedience to that higher spiritual order prevailing in the universe, which he recognised as being the expression of the mind of God, and therefore of more commanding authority than the mere arrangements and requirements of man. Under all its forms, reverence for Scripture, and for the sovereign majesty of God, a severe morality, popular sympathies and a fervent attachment to the cause of civil freedom have been the signs and tokens of the puritan spirit.

While saying thus much we are not concerned to deny that there were puritans who did not realise

the greatness of their own idea. There were those among them who had not that wider conception of the action of the Spirit of God in human life which leads a man to regard scholarship, knowledge, art and beauty as sacred things; they may not have always heard the voice of God speaking through the forces of history and in the facts of daily life as well as from the pages of revelation; and they may not have sufficiently recognised the developments of man's richer nature as gifts of God, God's way of unfolding man himself, enriching his culture and sweetening his life. But this is only true in a narrow and limited sense. Both in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the leaders of the puritans were among the foremost of their age in learning and intellectual force. They were, for the most part, university men, and for culture and refinement of taste had no need to fear comparison with their opponents either in Church or State. It may be true that there were small men among them, men bitter and narrow and rude, but so there were among those on the other side; and when all abatements have been made, and all has been said that can be said in the way of caricature and depreciation, it still remains true that the sacred cause of liberty owes much to these men, and that the puritan strain has entered into much that is best in our national life and literature.

But while there have been manifestations of the puritan spirit in different ages and in varying form, there was a distinct and definite period in English history which has come to be recognised as that of puritanism proper. This was a period of a hundred years, from the accession of Queen Elizabeth in 1558 to the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658. Previous to the first of these dates the controversy was between Romanist and Protestant, during the century referred to it was waged between Anglican and Puritan, and we can trace puritanism taking, as an historical movement, a definite line including its rise, development, ascendancy, and ultimate downfall.

The accession of Queen Elizabeth brought the English people to what we may call the parting of the ways. It was the introduction of a new era both for Church and State. Henry VIII came to the throne in 1509, and Elizabeth a few days before the beginning of 1559. During the half century between these two dates England was governed by three sovereigns of the House of Tudor and passed through three revolutions in her national Church life. At Henry's accession the Church in England was an organic portion of the Western Church, an extension into England of the one great Catholic Church of the West. Within this extension the Pope was supreme in all ecclesiastical causes; the highest Court of Appeal was at Rome; the highest

officers of the Church were appointed by the Pope; and as far back as the long reign of Henry III the Pope appointed Italian ecclesiastics not only to English bishoprics, but also to the ordinary livings of the Church. Then, in 1534, came the Reformation, and the Church *in* England became the Church *of* England. Various Acts of Parliament, but chiefly the great Act of Supremacy, transferred the papal authority to the King, and made Henry VIII, in everything but in name, Pope of England. It only remained for Pope Paul III to complete the process, which he did by issuing a Bull of Excommunication and deposition against the King and his abettors.

There was an important difference between the way the Reformation took its rise in England and the course it took among the protestant nations of the Continent. In Switzerland and Germany the movement began with the people; in England, on the contrary, it took its rise from the action of the State as a decisive movement and, for the most part, spread among the people afterwards. This accounts for the fact that when Edward VI came to the throne in 1547 the externals of worship were but little changed from their ancient form. The altars in the churches stood as of old; the priests wore their gorgeous vestments and celebrated their masses as before. And so long as this was the case and the Church service went on as it had done all their lives

and those of their fathers before them, the people generally troubled their heads very little about changes in legislation. But Edward VI had not long been king before new ways came in. In the spring of 1548 a service-book in English instead of in Latin was prepared, and issued with authority the following year. The first English Book of Common Prayer took the place of the Mass, which in itself was a momentous fact; and stone altars gave place to communion tables. Still further, the leaders of the English Church entered into close and friendly relations with the ministers of the Reformed Churches of the Continent. So much so, indeed, that Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer came over at Cranmer's request to assist him in the preparation of the Articles and in the revision of the First Prayer Book of 1549, preparatory to the one of 1552.

It was a revolution again, which came in when in 1553 Queen Mary ascended the English throne. In her first proclamation of August 18 she expressed a wish that her people should be of the old religion, 'the one she had ever professed from her infancy hitherto.' One of the first Acts of her first Parliament was the Act of Repeal which abolished nine Acts passed in the reign of Edward VI, and restored the Church to the condition in which it was at the death of Henry VIII. Her second Act of Repeal, of 1554, abolished eighteen Acts of Henry relating

to the Church, and one of Edward, thus restoring the Church to the condition in which it was in 1529 before the breach with Rome. England was again reconciled to the Papal See, and received absolution for her supposed sin of departure from the true faith. In meekness and docility she returned to the Roman obedience, and the power of the Catholic clergy became what it had been when the Pope constituted Henry VIII Defender of the Faith. But while restoring the ancient Church to its former ascendancy she did so in a spirit so ruthless that in the end it was found to have defeated itself. She outraged the better feeling of the nation by burning worthy men and women at the stake, so that while she overthrew the work of her father and her brother, hers also in turn came to be overthrown. It is but little indeed of the Acts and deeds of her government that took permanent place in the Constitution or laws of England. It has been truly said that her cruelties, her martyr-fires by 'the loathing which they produced in the minds of Englishmen did more to establish the Reformation than any other single cause.'

At the same time there were other causes at work as well. Even in the earlier days of Henry VIII the New Learning had begun to influence the minds of men and to change their attitude to the old ideas. In its conflict with old institutions and ancient modes

of thought, it had with it as a mighty ally the newly-discovered power of the printing press. A new world was come to its birth time. It is said that most of the young men of brains and energy who grew to manhood during Mary's reign were lapsing from Catholicism and that educated women were falling faster and further.

There is one fact connected with the reign of Mary to which special attention must be called as being fundamental to the historical development of puritanism. Many of the leading men who had embraced protestantism in the reigns of Henry and Edward found, as soon as the new Queen came to the throne, that England was no longer a place of safety for them. Burnet says that more than a thousand of these men sought refuge among the Reformed Churches of the Continent. Strype adds that among these exiles there were five bishops, five deans, four archdeacons, and fifty-seven doctors of divinity and preachers who had held these offices in the Church under Edward VI. It is to be noted that these men sought refuge not in the Lutheran cities of North Germany but among the Zwinglian and Calvinistic peoples of Switzerland and the Upper Rhine. This fact is thought to indicate that the English Church in the time of Edward VI was more Zwinglian than Lutheran in its view of the sacraments than is sometimes supposed.

While the exiles found homes in various cities, in Frankfort, Strasburg, Bâle, Zurich and Geneva, Zurich seems to have been their most important centre. Here during the five years of Mary's ill-starred reign they remained, forming friendships of closest Christian affection which have their record in the extensive body of letters preserved in the archives of the city, and which were written to Bullinger and other brethren after their return. But what is more to our purpose they were brought into close contact with the doctrines and discipline of the foreign reformers. They were favourably impressed with the simpler Church polity, to which they became accustomed, and were attracted to what seemed to them the more scriptural and spiritual forms of worship. The impressions thus received and the opinions they then came to hold had direct influence upon the course of events in the days near at hand.

Their time of return came at length when on the 17th of November, 1558, Mary passed away and Elizabeth was proclaimed queen in her stead. Sandys, who was then at Strasburg, heard the news on the 19th of December, and passed it on to the brethren at Zurich and Geneva. All prepared to return at once. The winter was, however, unusually severe, the roads in places almost impassable, and, the Rhine being frozen hard, sailing was impracticable. Those who started

from Zurich were no less than fifty-seven days on the return journey. But rough and tedious as that journey was it was nevertheless cheered by a rising hope, the hope, as they expressed it, 'that we may teach and practise the true knowledge of God's Word which we have learned in this our banishment, and by God's merciful providence seen in the best Reformed Churches.' That is to say, these protestant exiles returned to England with foreign ideals in their minds which they hoped to be able to realise in the government and worship of the English Church at home.

Meantime Elizabeth had been already welcomed to the throne as the cherished hope of the protestant part of the nation. Young as she was she had seen strange sides of life and gone through rough experiences. Still, she had embraced the ideas of the later policy of her father, had entered into the spirit of the New Learning, and had expressed approval of a reform of the Church in accordance with a fuller understanding of Scripture and Christian antiquity. At the service held on Christmas Day, and therefore only a few days after her accession, she forbade the elevation of the Host, and on Bishop Oglethorpe, who was the celebrant, refusing to obey, she went out after the reading of the Gospel. Her feeling was still more marked on the more important occasion of the Coronation Service held on the 13th of January.

Oglethorpe again officiated, again she commanded him to celebrate without the elevation, and again he refused. So she also took her own line of action, and just before the time when elevation would take place she retired to her 'traverse' or dressing-room. On another state occasion, at the opening of Parliament, when she was met by the last abbot of Westminster with monks and candles, she unceremoniously bade him 'Away with those torches; we can see well enough!'

Still, in spite of these manifestations the more advanced protestants could not feel quite sure of her. She had told De Feria, the Spanish ambassador, that she acknowledged the Real Presence in the sacrament, and did now and then pray to the Virgin Mary. On another occasion also she explained to him that her religion was that of all sensible people who looked upon all the differences between the different versions of Christianity as little more than a mere bagatelle. The feeling of uncertainty concerning her thus created is reflected in the letters from England preserved in the archives of Zurich. One of the returned exiles, writing to a friend in that city, says: 'If the Queen herself would but banish the Mass from her private chapel the whole thing might easily be got rid of.' John Jewell, also, afterwards bishop of Salisbury, writes in much the same strain: 'As to ceremonies and

maskings there is a little too much foolery. That little silver cross of ill-omened origin still maintains its place in the Queen's Chapel.' In a further letter to Peter Martyr he adds: 'The scenic apparatus of divine worship is now under agitation: and those very things which you and I have so often laughed at are now seriously and solemnly entertained by *certain persons* as if the Christian religion could not exist without something tawdry. We cannot make these fooleries of much importance.'

The first public act of Elizabeth, as it was with Mary, was to issue a proclamation forbidding any change being made in the forms of worship till Parliament met and settled the future order by statute. This first Parliament of Elizabeth's reign met on the 25th of January, 1559, and sat till the 8th of May, to begin the 'alterations of religion.' After restoring to the Crown the first-fruits and tenths which Mary had returned to the Church, and repealing such penal laws as had been enacted against the service used under Edward VI the Houses passed to the two great memorable Acts of this Parliament, the Act of Supremacy and the Act of Uniformity, the two pillars on which the Church of England has rested down to our own day. The Act of Supremacy repealed Mary's Act of Repeal, and restored the ancient Jurisdictions and pre-eminencies appertaining to the Imperial Crown, but with one important change.

Henry VIII and Edward VI had each claimed to be Supreme *Head* of the Church of England. Elizabeth was unwilling to be so described, maintaining as she did that this honour belongs to Christ and to Christ alone. She was therefore entitled Supreme *Governor*, the oath prescribed to be taken by all and every ecclesiastical person being to the effect that the Queen's Highness is the only supreme governor of this realm, as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes as temporal, and that no foreign prince or prelate hath any ecclesiastical or spiritual authority within her dominions. Still while the Queen renounced the Headship of the Church the Act of the Submission of the Clergy was restored in full so that it was only the mere title that was renounced, and the whole power was reserved to the Crown. There was fierce battle round the Supremacy Bill for two whole months, from February 9 till April 29, but after renewed debates, changes and concessions it was finally passed. Any person refusing to take the oath prescribed under this Act was to forfeit and lose all and every ecclesiastical and spiritual promotion, benefit and office, and every temporal and lay promotion and office which he held at the time of refusal; his emoluments should cease as though he were actually dead.

There was one section of the Act of Supremacy (1 Eliz. cap. i., sec. 18) of profound significance for

coming time. The Queen and her successors were to have power, by letters patent under the Great Seal to appoint commissioners to exercise under the Crown all manner of jurisdictions and to visit, reform, redress, correct and amend all errors, heresies, and schisms which might come within the scope of spiritual or ecclesiastical power. In other words, while the two great Acts referred to revolutionised the ecclesiastical constitution, this commission was to carry out the Queen's visitation and enforce her injunctions, and that too without authority from or reference to any clerical or ecclesiastical authority whatsoever, except that which pertained to the Crown itself. These commissions were renewed from time to time, deriving their authority direct from the Crown under the Great Seal and held responsible not to the Church in any sense, nor even to Parliament, but to the Privy Council. These commissions, whether temporary, as in the case of the first, which completed its task at the end of October, 1559, or permanent, as in the case of the Court of High Commission of 1583, became the recognised mode by which the supremacy of the sovereign, with the aid of the Privy Council, was brought to bear upon the government of the Church of England independently alike of Parliament or Convocation. In Tudor times the *personal* government of the Church by the sovereign was complete, and not less complete under Elizabeth

than under Henry VIII, Edward VI, or Queen Mary.

The first Parliament of Elizabeth is memorable in our history not only for the Act of Supremacy but also for the Act of Uniformity by which it was accompanied. The reforming party in the Church were agreed as to doctrine but not as to discipline and ceremonies. This Act was intended to secure uniformity in both. But it was found then, as often since, that the men most resolute in enforcing uniformity are the men who create the most serious divisions. The first thing to secure was the basis or standard. Before the assembling of Parliament there was a private consultation held at the house of Sir Thomas Smith in Cannon Row to discuss which Prayer Book, that of 1552 or the one of 1549, should be submitted to Parliament for consideration and with what suggested changes. The Service Book of 1552 being agreed upon, certain changes were made therein, probably to meet the wishes of the Queen. In the Communion Service the old words of delivery were prefixed to the new; the rubric which denied the 'real and essential presence' was left out; the clause in the Litany which prayed for deliverance from the Bishop of Rome and from all his detestable enormities was also omitted. A further change made at the instance of the Queen, a change most distasteful to the puritans, was the introduction of what

is now known as the Ornaments rubric, framed for the retention of the priestly vestments as they had been in 1548 before the issue of the First Prayer Book of 1549. This was a distinctly reactionary step in the view of the more advanced protestants, setting aside as it did the legislation of 1553 which prohibited the use of alb, vestment and cope in the prefatory rubric to the Order for Daily Prayer.

The Act of Uniformity, having thus re-established the Second Prayer Book of 1552, with alterations and additions, as the recognised order of public worship, also made its use imperative under pressure of certain pains and penalties which were certainly not wanting in stringency. It provided that a minister using any other form of service, or any other manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper, should for the first offence lose a year's income and be imprisoned for six months; for a second offence he should suffer deprivation of benefice, and for a third imprisonment for life. So far as the laity were concerned, absence from public worship without lawful or reasonable excuse brought the offender under pain of the censure of the Church, and subjected him to a fine of twelve pence for the use of the poor of his parish.

Such were some of the provisions of the Act of Uniformity which came into force on the 24th of June, 1559, one day after the Act of Supremacy. The lines of legislation being thus laid down by Parliament the

Queen under the powers conferred by the Act of Supremacy appointed a body of commissioners to make a general visitation of the kingdom and see the laws carried out. These commissions were appointed in companies according to districts, each company consisting of several noblemen and gentlemen, a divine, a doctor of civil law and one or more lawyers. For their guidance and common action certain instructions were provided which are known as the Injunctions of Elizabeth. They were based on the previous injunctions issued by King Edward in 1547, and consisted of fifty-three Articles. They appear to have been drawn up by the revisers of the Prayer Book and were distinctly protestant in tone, Injunctions 2 and 18, for example, ordering the putting away of all the old paraphernalia associated with the ancient forms of worship, and also the abolition of all ecclesiastical processions. They were intended to regulate the lives of the clergy and the subjects of their preaching. All ecclesiastical persons having cure of souls were, to the uttermost of their wit, knowledge and learning, to declare manifest and open, at least four times every year, that all foreign power had been taken away and abolished, and that the Queen's power within her realms is the highest power under God ; they were forbidden to set forth or extol the dignity of any images, relics or miracles ; and on other subjects were to preach a sermon at

least once a quarter. They were to 'take away, utterly extinct and destroy all shrines, coverings of shrines, all tables, candlesticks, trindals, and rolls of wax, pictures, paintings and all other monuments of feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry and superstition so that there remain no memory of the same.' As in recent times mere children unlearned and unable to read matins or mass had been made priests, such as these were no more to be admitted to any cure or spiritual function. There should be 'a modest and distinct song so used in all parts of the common prayers in the Church that the same may be as plainly understanded as if it were read without singing.' Still 'for the comforting of such that delight in music,' either at the beginning or the end of common prayer it may be permitted that 'there may be sung a hymn or suchlike song to the praise of Almighty God in the best sort of melody and music that may be conveniently devised,' but still so 'that the sentence of the hymn may be understanded and perceived.' Under the sanction of these and suchlike laws, and guided by these Injunctions, the commissioners appointed set forth in the summer of 1559 to reform and reconstruct the religious life of England of their time.

## II

### VESTMENTS AND CEREMONIES

THE task assigned to the commissioners, of making an ecclesiastical visitation through the various counties, was proceeded with soon after Parliament was dissolved. Jewell, writing to Peter Martyr in the month of August, says: 'I am on the point of setting out upon a long and troublesome commission for the establishment of religion through Reading, Abingdon, Gloucester, Bristol, Bath, Wells, Exeter, Cornwall, Dorset and Salisbury, a journey of about seven hundred miles, and occupying about four months.' It was theirs to see the two principal Acts of the recent Parliament carried into practical effect. The Act of Supremacy as superseding the authority of the Pope by that of the Queen bore mainly, of course, upon the Roman Catholics in the nation who were opposed to the Reformation altogether. The Act of Uniformity was intended to regulate and bring to one standard the forms of worship of the more advanced protestants, whose one desire was to see the Reformation carried further still.

The Roman Catholic bishops, at Elizabeth's accession had been greatly reduced in numbers by death; those who remained, with the single exception of Kitchin of Llandaff, resolved to resign their positions and refuse the Oath of Supremacy rather than accept the Queen as governor of the Church. Their example was followed by an abbot and an abbess, four priors, twelve deans, fourteen archdeacons, sixty canons or prebendaries, and a hundred of the beneficed clergy, together with fifteen heads of Colleges in Oxford and Cambridge. The majority of the unbeneficed clergy took the oath and kept their places as they had done through all the changes of the three last reigns. It is calculated that there were then about 9400 clergy, of whom only 192 refused the oath. The vicar of Bray was the type of a class. Anthony Kitchin contrived to retain possession of the bishopric of Llandaff from 1545 to 1567, taking all the incongruous oaths required by Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth—Jewell, after telling Peter Martyr that Dr Smith the Regius Professor of Divinity had now at last recanted for the fifth time, said to him—'Go now and deny transubstantiation if you can!'

The Act of Uniformity, affecting as it did the Roman Catholics as well as the Puritans, was in their case carried out somewhat rigorously. In the case of the Queen herself but little change was made in the

ritual of her own private chapel. Being fond of pomp and magnificence in worship as in everything else, she would not part with the altar or crucifix; the choristers and priests still appeared in their copes; the altar was furnished with rich plate, had gilt candlesticks with lighted candles and a massive silver crucifix in the midst; on solemn festivals there was special music; and the ceremonies observed by the knights of the garter in their adoration towards the altar—ceremonies which had been abolished by King Edward and restored by Queen Mary—were now retained. So that the service in the Queen's own chapel, save that it was rendered in English instead of Latin, was as showy and splendid as in the days of the Roman ritual.

But whatever may have been Elizabeth's own private tastes in worship, there can be no doubt that in the latter half of 1559 the commissioners empowered by her made great changes in the London churches generally, and especially in the cathedral church of St Paul. According to Strype they took effectual care to have all the instruments and utensils of idolatry demolished and destroyed, such as the roods with Mary and John and the images of tutelary saints. They commanded the prebendaries and archdeacon to see that St Paul's be stripped of all images and idols, and that in place of the altar a decent table should be provided for the celebration of the Lord's

Supper. The people, too, with the memories of Smithfield fires strong within them, joined in the crusade. They attended upon the commissioners, carried into Cheapside, St Paul's Churchyard and Smithfield, roods, crucifixes, the vestments of the priests, copes and surplices, banners and altar-cloths, books and Good Friday sepulchres; and all that could be burnt they burnt to ashes.

Turning now to the protestants and to the way in which the Act of Uniformity affected them, we find them already dividing themselves into two parties which we may describe as court reformers and puritans. While there was difference between them on some points, on one point there was absolute agreement. They were both against toleration; both believed not only in uniformity but also in its enforcement by the sword of the civil power. What they did differ about was as to what was the standard of uniformity, the one side upholding the Queen's supremacy and the law of the land, the other the Scriptures and the decrees of provincial and national synods. The court party and the majority of the bishops while admitting that the Scriptures were a perfect rule of faith, contended that they were not also an authoritative standard of discipline and church government, these matters being left by our Lord and His Apostles to the discretion of the civil magistrate. The puritans, on the contrary, maintained

that in discipline as well as in doctrine nothing should be imposed as necessary which could not be proved from Scripture. They held that what Christ has left indifferent man should not insist upon, for we are bidden to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. They could not accept as indifferent, but rejected as unlawful, rites and ceremonies which, as experience shewed, tended to idolatry and superstition. Christ, said they, is the sole lawgiver in His Church, and such things as are really necessary He Himself has enjoined to be observed to the end of the world. Their own experience of kingly interference in matters religious had not been without its lessons. They could not forget Henry's Act of Six Articles, the whip of six strings, as it was called; the dread memories of Mary's reign, too, were of painfully recent date and the puritans felt themselves drawn to the forms of ecclesiastical polity prevailing among the Reformed Churches of Switzerland with whom they had so recently enjoyed Christian fellowship. Thus in protestantism there was at this early stage a right and a left wing, not unlike the differences sometimes found in a modern political party.

While the new Injunctions had made great changes in the forms of worship, and that in a protestant direction, there was a provision in the 30th Article which caused great searchings of heart.

This required that 'all persons admitted into any vocation ecclesiastical, or into any society of learning in either of the Universities should use and wear such habits and garments and such square caps as were most commonly or orderly received in the last year of the reign of Edward VI.' This was really a revival of what was called the Vestiarian Controversy, which had stirred great feeling ever since the day when Hooper on being made bishop of Gloucester refused to wear the vestments usually worn by bishops at their consecration. He called them the livery of Antichrist, and even obtained the King's permission to decline the bishopric on that account, only yielding at length to the earnest entreaty of other bishops and on the understanding that he might lay the vestments aside after wearing them at his consecration. To him and to men of his mind the garments used at mass were a significant symbol of ecclesiastical tendency as the flag of a nation is a significant symbol of cherished nationality. It was the outward and visible sign of a system which, in their souls, they had cast away from them. This controversy had never really altogether died out, as the letters sent to friends in Zurich remain to testify. Jewell, afterwards bishop of Salisbury, tells Peter Martyr that the doctrine of the Church is most pure, 'but as to ceremonies and maskings there is a little too much foolery...God alone knows what will be the issue.

The slow-paced horses retard the chariot.' Sampson, afterwards dean of Christ Church, asks the same friend: 'Should we not rather quit the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, than that these relics of the Amorites should be admitted?' Thomas Lever, master of St John's College, Cambridge, in Edward's time, writes that the Injunctions 'having prescribed to the clergy some ornaments such as the mass-priests formerly had and still retain, a great number of the clergy are now resuming similar habits, as they say, for the sake of obedience.' And finally, Edwin Sandys, afterwards bishop of Worcester, wrote to Martyr in 1560 telling him, among other things, that 'the popish vestments remain in our Church, I mean the Copes, which, however, we hope will not last long.'

Such was the mental attitude of these men between Elizabeth's first Parliament in 1559 and her second Parliament which was opened on the 12th of January, 1563. What is of consequence, however, is that at the same time with this second Parliament there met also a Convocation which was destined to leave an enduring mark on the Church of England. It met at St Paul's, and under letters of advice from the Queen calling for a review of the doctrine and discipline of the Church, proceeded first with the subject of doctrine. Archbishop Parker, somewhat elate with the idea that the time had arrived when the Church would be allowed to legislate for herself,

opened the proceedings with the buoyant remark—'Behold the opportunity come for reforming the Church of England!' The first thing that was done was the carrying through of a revision of Cranmer's Articles of 1551, as a theological guide for the clergy in their public teaching. After being reduced to the number of thirty-nine at which they still remain, these Articles were sent to the Queen for the required authority under the Great Seal.

So far all was plain sailing, for on the matter of doctrine both sides were fairly agreed. But after this, Convocation proceeded to the discussion of the more thorny question of rites and ceremonies, and on reopening thus the whole ecclesiastical settlement on its ceremonial side, the relative strength of parties was plainly made manifest. To begin with, an overture was presented, bearing thirty-three signatures, including those of five deans, the provost of Eton, twelve archdeacons, and fourteen proctors or representatives, and demanding, among other things, that at the celebration of the Lord's Supper the posture of kneeling, as suggesting the adoration of the elements, should be left indifferent; that the sign of the cross in baptism should be disused; that the wearing of copes and surplices be abolished, so that all ministers should use 'a grave and comely side[1] garment' or preaching gown; and that they should not be

[1] *i.e.* long.

compelled to wear such caps and gowns as the Romish clergy.

This overture not being approved, a motion was then brought forward to the effect that while Sundays and the special feasts associated with the events of our Saviour's life should be religiously observed, all other holidays should be abolished; that in all parish churches the minister in common prayer should turn his face to the people; that the cross in baptism be omitted; that kneeling at the sacrament be left to the discretion of the minister; and that it should suffice if he wear the surplice once, provided that no minister should say service or minister the sacraments but in comely garment or habit. After some discussion this motion was carried to the vote, when it appeared there was a majority in its favour by forty-three against thirty-five. But the proxies had then to be counted and these reversed the decision by one vote and only one, there being now fifty-eight for the motion and fifty-nine against. So that by the vote of one man, who was not present at the debate—that 'odd, shy man'—as he has been called, it was thus determined to make no alteration in the ceremonies, and the Court party, therefore, carried their point in that memorable Convocation.

It remained now to be seen what effect this decision would have upon the country at large. There being a visitation of the plague in 1563, there

was not much done that year in the way of enforcing uniformity in the matter of the vestments. Many of the parochial clergy had an aversion to the prescribed habits; sometimes they wore them, but more frequently they did not. Occasionally a refractory minister would be cited before the spiritual courts and there admonished, and so the matter ended. But at length more peremptory steps were taken. A document bearing date February 14, 1564, was laid before the Queen setting forth the irregularities prevailing in the order of Church service. She was greatly incensed by this report, and especially that so little heed was paid to her laws, for she regarded the Church as hers and held that in all matters pertaining to it her will should be paramount. She therefore addressed a letter to the two archbishops directing them to inquire as to what diversities in doctrine, rites and ceremonies prevailed among the clergy, and to take effectual methods for securing an exact order and uniformity.

The puritans tried to avert the storm they saw to be approaching. One of their most trusted leaders, Dr Pilkington, the bishop of Durham, laid their case before the Earl of Leicester, seeking his interest with the Queen on their behalf. He pleaded that compulsion should not be used in things of liberty, and urged his lordship to consider how all protestant countries had cast away popish apparel along with

the Pope, while England was resolving to keep to it as a holy relic. He was sure, he said, that many ministers would rather lose their livings than comply, and that, too, at a time when there was great scarcity of teachers, many places having none at all. But all pleas were alike unavailing. The Queen gave command to Archbishop Parker to proceed at once in the enforcement of uniformity, a command he obeyed with vigour and resolution. So much excitement prevailed that Bishop Jewell in a sermon preached at St Paul's Cross endeavoured to throw oil on the troubled waters. He said he was not there to defend the prescribed habits; his purpose was rather to shew that the things prescribed were, after all, only matters of indifference. Still they were insisted upon. Under the title of 'Advertisements' Archbishop Parker issued certain Articles apparently without the royal sanction or authority. They were described as 'certain orders or rules thought meet and convenient though not prescribed as laws equivalent with the eternal Word of God, or as of necessity binding the conscience, but as temporal orders, mere ecclesiastical.'

But though thus mildly described the Advertisements were sufficiently imperative. All licenses for preaching bearing date before March 1, 1564 were to be regarded as void and of none effect, but would be renewed to those meet for office. In the matter of

the vestments it was ordered that in cathedrals and collegiate churches the officiating minister at the Communion should use a cope; that deans and prebends should wear a surplice with a silk hood, in the choir; every minister saying public prayer or administering sacraments should wear a comely surplice with sleeves, to be provided at the charges of the parish. In their common apparel abroad all deans of cathedral churches, masters of colleges, archdeacons and other dignitaries having any ecclesiastical living were to wear side gowns with sleeves straight at the band without any falling cape, and to wear tippets of sarcenet.

To some of the bishops the enforcing of the Advertisements proved a very unwelcome task. Bishop Jewell writing to his friend Bullinger in 1566, says: 'The contest about the surplice is not yet at rest. I wish that all, even the slightest vestige of popery might be removed from our churches, and above all from our minds. But the Queen at this time is unable to endure the least alteration in the matter of religion.' The nonconforming puritans felt they were entitled to claim that the bishops in enforcing the orders upon their clergy were doing so only under constraint and not by conviction. They were temporising, but for themselves they could not temporise. They could not look upon these vestments as matters of indifference, associated as they had

been with Romanism and the evil days of Mary's reign. In July, 1566, Humphrey and Sampson writing to Bullinger asked: 'How can that habit be thought to be consistent with the simple ministry of Christ which used to set off the theatrical pomp of the Romish priesthood? Our opponents are the real innovators. In King Edward's time the Lord's Supper was celebrated in simplicity in many places without the surplice. The cope was then abrogated by law and is now being restored after abrogation. This is not to extirpate popery but to replant it; not to advance in religion but to go backward. Why should we borrow anything from popery? Why should we not agree in rites as well as in doctrine with the other Reformed Churches? It is only seven years ago that we regained our liberty, why should we go back to servitude? There is danger in these practices; they are insidious; they do not shew themselves all at once, but creep on little by little. Why cannot the bishops endure us who formerly bore the same cross with them and who now preach the same Christ? Why do they cast us into prison? Why do they persecute us on account of the habits? Why do they spoil us of our substance and means of subsistence?' In this urgent manner the president of Magdalen College and the dean of Christ Church put the case on behalf of themselves and their puritan brethren. Turner, dean of Bath and Wells, a man

of versatile learning and still remembered as one of the early founders of science, when preaching in his cathedral asked, with a feeling of indignation: 'Who gave the bishops more authority over me than I over them, either to forbid me or to deprive me, unless they have it from their holy father the Pope?'

The nonconforming clergy claimed that they had an equal right with the conformist to say the Church of England was theirs. Indeed they were not without hope that the future of that Church would be with them. They remembered that when the decision in Convocation went against them in 1563, it did so by only one vote, and that a proxy vote; so that there at least parties proved to be of nearly even strength. And there were not wanting signs that in the community at large they were increasing in strength and influence. Among the laity there were not a few who were quite as averse to the habits as they were themselves. With increasing dislike to popery there was increasing dislike to the vestments, many refusing to go to the churches where they were worn. Even Whitgift recorded that the clergy who did wear them were sometimes rudely assailed in the streets as time-servers and papists in disguise. There were some people at least who could not forget that only ten years ago friends and neighbours of theirs had been burnt at the stake in Mary's time. To

them therefore the vestments seemed almost as if they were stained with the blood of the martyrs. And not merely among the common people, the puritans had reason to know, there was sympathy with them, but also in high places, even in the Court itself, with men like Secretary Cecil, the Earl of Leicester, Sir Francis Knollys and the Earls of Bedford and Warwick. Meantime the archbishop persisted in his policy of coercion. Among those whom he cited to Lambeth were Sampson and Humphrey with whom he entered into conference on the points at issue. They afterwards appealed to him by letter pleading that conscience is a very tender thing and all men cannot look upon the same things as being indifferent. They also made their appeal to antiquity, to the practice of the other Reformed Churches in their own day and even to the consciences of the bishops themselves. It so happened that at the very time these conferences were going forward, Sampson and Humphrey were both selected as the preachers at St Paul's Cross during Lent, an appointment regarded as a mark of distinction. The archbishop was indignant, and writing to Cecil he said: 'This appointment is not by me; by whom I know not: either by the Bishop of London or the Lord Mayor.' Being thus incensed he had the two men before him again and peremptorily commanded them either to conform or to leave their

posts. They merely replied that their consciences would not permit them to comply with his injunctions, come what might. Upon this they were then and there committed to prison; and as Sampson's deanery was in the gift of the Crown he was deprived of his office at once. The same experience came to Humphrey somewhat later on. When he also was deprived, he sent an earnest remonstrance to the commissioners in which he says: 'Since the mass attires be so straitly commanded, the mass itself may shortly be looked for. A sword is now put into the hands of those that under Queen Mary have drawn it for popery. The painful preacher for his labour is beaten, the unpreaching prelate offending in greater escapeth scot-free. The learned man without his cap is afflicted, the capped man without learning is not touched. Is not this directly to break the laws of God? Is not this to prefer man's will before faith, judgement and mercy, man's traditions before the ordinances of God? We confess one faith of Jesus Christ, we preach one doctrine, we acknowledge one ruler in earth over all things. Shall we be used so for a surplice? Shall brethren persecute brethren for a forked cap devised of singularity of him that is our foreign enemy? Oh that ever I saw this day, that ever our adversaries should laugh to see brethren fall together by the ears!'

The cases of Sampson and Humphrey, leading

Oxford men, came to a final issue towards the end of April, 1565. Then about the middle of October of that same year the state of things in the sister University of Cambridge came under review. There the movement in favour of the Protestant Reformation took shape early. As far back as 1510 Erasmus, after being at Louvain and Oxford, came to Cambridge in search of a new field of labour, taking up his residence, under Fisher's protection, in Queens' College. Between 1511 and 1515 he there wrote his *Novum Instrumentum* which did much to prepare the way for protestantism, and the light he kindled was kept burning. Later on a little band of Cambridge scholars met together by stealth for the discussion of Martin Luther's earlier treatises, William Tyndale, the ever-memorable translator of the English Bible, who was resident in the University from 1514 to 1521, being one of them. A recent historian of the University records that while it was the taunt of their adversaries that the members of this brotherhood were mostly young men, it is certain that they were among the most able and diligent of the student class of the time, and their influence made numerous converts. He goes on to say that the best scholarship of the University was represented among them, as is proved by the fact that when Cardinal Wolsey was founding his college at Oxford, and was for that purpose selecting from

Cambridge the most efficient teachers and lecturers, no fewer than six out of the eight thus chosen were notable supporters of the Reformation doctrine. The leaven had thus been working for more than a generation when in the autumn of 1565 the prevalence of puritanism came to be matter for serious inquiry. It arose, first of all, as affecting certain licenses to preach. Pope Alexander VI, during his occupancy of the See of Rome (1492—1503) granted to the University of Cambridge the privilege of licensing twelve ministers yearly, to preach anywhere throughout England without obtaining license from any of the bishops. These were licensed under the common seal of the University, and this privilege was renewed in the letters patent granted by Queen Elizabeth, and was retained and made use of to further the more advanced forms of Reformation. George Withers, one of the preachers thus licensed, went so far in his protestant zeal as to break certain 'superstitious' painted windows in the college chapels on which the use of prayers for the dead was enjoined. Upon this he was summoned to appear before the archbishop at Lambeth where he 'refused to enter bonds for wearing of the cornered cap.' This led to further inquiry which proved conclusively that nonconformity in the matter of the vestments was more widely spread in the University than had been supposed. Proceedings were therefore taken

at once, and, in expectation of a proclamation of enforcement, a petition was forwarded to Cecil, at that time chancellor of the University, praying him to use his influence with the Queen that they might not be compelled to revive a popish habit which they had laid aside. They took leave to assure him, as in the presence of God, that nothing but reason and the quiet enjoyment of their consciences had led them to take the course they had taken. Many in the University of piety and learning, they said, were convinced of the unlawfulness of the habits, therefore, if conformity should be insisted upon, they would be compelled to resign their positions, and so, by rigour and imposition both religion and learning would suffer. The first of the signatures to this petition was that of the vice-chancellor, Dr Beaumont, master of Trinity, who had himself been one of the exiles in Zurich in Mary's time. Other signatures were those of Kelk, master of Magdalene, Hutton, master of Pembroke, and Longworth, master of St John's. Curious to relate there was also attached to this petition the signature of John Whitgift, fellow of Peterhouse and Lady Margaret professor, who in after years, as archbishop of Canterbury, was to be the resolute persecutor of the puritans. This petition was ill-taken by the chancellor who wrote to the vice-chancellor requiring him to call together the heads of colleges and let them know that if they

valued Christianity, the honour of the University, and the favour of the Queen they must continue the use of the habits.

It was at St John's college that discontent first shewed itself in violent outbreak. A young man named Fulke had 'lefte of wearing a square cappe and used a hatte,' and both at St Mary's and in the college chapel had preached in strong terms against the use of the surplice. Upon this the college was roused to a high pitch of excitement, and 'in fine they waxed so hot that they could abide no such garment upon them.' The climax was reached at a festival in October when Longworth, the master, was —it is suggested, intentionally—absent from college. On Saturday evening, October 12, at the first tolling of the bell for prayers a number of the youths of the house rushed into the chapel without surplices, and more than that, hissed at those who came after with their surplices on. The master on his return on hearing of what had taken place practically ranged himself and the University on the side of the malcontents. The other side sent in a set of articles accusatory and urged the chancellor to take action, but Cecil was slow and Longworth seemed quite indifferent, saying that he knew the real mind of the chancellor more than most people. However, he and several of the refractory students were sent for to London, but it came to the ears of people in

Cambridge that the master had been very favourably entertained both by Cecil and the bishop of London. In the end Cecil drew up an easy form of retraction which Longworth signed with the promise that it should be read before the college on his return. But as the outbreak spread to other colleges, and especially to Trinity, Cecil took up the matter more seriously. He then wrote to the vice-chancellor describing this nonconformity as 'a wilful breaking of common order, a lewd leprosy of libertines,' and requiring him to call together the heads of houses, urging them to unity, and further recommending that preachers who had opposed the use of the vestments should be inhibited for a time from preaching and lecturing. 'Nevertheless,' says Neal, 'the University of Cambridge was still a sanctuary for puritans.'

The colleges having been thus dealt with, the archbishop began to devise means by which he could make London less puritanical. Grindal was at that time bishop of this important diocese, and though he had himself been one of the Zurich exiles, and was in sympathy with simpler ways of worship, yet irregularities prevailing, and the Queen's anger thereat, led him to join the archbishop in his crusade on behalf of uniformity.

At this point, Beaumont, the master of Trinity, put the direct question to Cecil whether, under the Act, he had power to deprive a man merely

because he declined to wear a surplice, seeing that that penalty had not been attached to disobedience in the Queen's Injunctions. This point the archbishop also was debating in his mind and was not clear upon it. He sought legal advice on this matter of deprivation, but got little guidance: 'I must say this much more that some lawyers be in opinion that it is hard to proceed in deprivation having no more warrant but the Queen's Majesty's word of mouth.' However, after being much tossed to and fro in his mind and consulting with his brother bishops he determined to run the risk. He would call before himself and the bishop of London all pastors and curates of the city, would try to win them to conformity by setting forth the penalty of disobedience; would then examine them one by one, and obtain, if possible, a promise of conformity in ministration, testified by subscription of their hands; then to suspend all who should refuse. He felt he was taking a strong course of action and was not without misgiving. By way of strengthening his own wavering resolution he sought the countenance of eminent laymen to stand by him. 'We trust,' he wrote to Cecil, 'that the Queen's Majesty will send some honourable to join with us two, to authorise the rather her commandment and pleasure.' The day before the eventful meeting he wrote again hoping for the presence of Cecil himself, also for that of the Lord

Keeper Bacon and the Marquess of Northampton, inviting them to dine with him, and asking to be certified of their coming. But they would have none of it. They agreed that it was the archbishop's work, not theirs, and they resolved to leave him to it.

Tuesday, March 26, 1566, was the fateful date on which the clergy of London were cited to appear before Parker and the bishop of London at Lambeth. As he could prevail upon no layman, or any of the nobility, or members of council to join him, he obtained the presence of the dean of Westminster and a few canonists for the occasion. In response to his summons about a hundred and ten ministers presented themselves, nine or ten being absent. To secure that the demand he was about to make should be quite clear and definite there was provided for their inspection a clergyman properly dressed according to the pattern prescribed by the regulations. Robert Cole, the rector of St Mary le Bow, a nonconforming minister who had been brought to compliance, consented to stand there to show how the Queen wished them to be attired when discharging their ecclesiastical functions. It is difficult to restrain a smile at the narrative, for it reads like a passage of mordant satire from *Sartor Resartus*. After some preliminary efforts at persuasion the chancellor of the London diocese became the spokes-

man of the occasion. 'My masters and the ministers of London,' said he, 'the Council's pleasure is that strictly ye keep the unity of apparel like to this man, as ye see him: that is, a square cap, a scholar's gown priestlike, or tippet, and in the Church a linen surplice: and inviolably observe the rubric of the Book of Common Prayer, and the Queen's Majesty's Injunctions and the Book of Convocation. Ye that will presently subscribe, write *Volo*. Those that will not subscribe, write *Nolo*. Be brief: make no words.' Some of them attempted to speak, 'Peace, peace,' said the chancellor. 'Apparitor, call the churches. Masters answer presently *sub poena contemptus*: and set your names.' The apparitor, or summoner, called the names of the churches; first of the peculiars of Canterbury; then of the incumbents of Southwark in Winchester diocese; then of the London clergy. Parker writing to Cecil the same day told him that thirty-seven refused to conform—'of which number were the best and some preachers.' The rest submitted. Of those who refused he says: 'In fine we did suspend them and sequester their fruits and from all manner ministry. They showed reasonable quietness and modesty, otherwise than I looked for. I think some of them will come in when they shall feel their want.' So Archbishop Parker coldly thought, unconsciously measuring himself while measuring them. There he was wrong. They were resolute

Englishmen, had counted the cost and had no thought for a moment of returning on their steps. Not that they did not feel the consequences keenly: 'We are killed in our souls,' said they, 'for that we cannot perform in the singleness of our hearts this our ministry.' It was this and not the mere pinch of possible bodily want that touched them. Still all must be faced. 'We have thought good,' they further say, 'to yield ourselves into the hands of men, to suffer whatsoever God hath appointed us to suffer for the preferring of the commandments of God and a clear conscience before the commandments of men....Not despising men, therefore, but trusting in God only, we seek to serve Him with a clear conscience so long as we shall live here, assuring ourselves that those things we shall suffer for doing so shall be a testimony to the world, that great reward is laid up for us in heaven, where we doubt not but to rest for ever with them that have before our days suffered for the like.'

# III

## THE PURITANS AND THE HIERARCHY

THE separation made at Lambeth palace between the consenting and non-consenting clergy had more significance and farther-reaching consequences than could be realised at the time. The decided action then taken by the authorities of the Church led to yet more resolute advance on the part of the dissentients, so that the question soon came to be one, not merely of vestments and forms of ritual, but of the whole hierarchical system on which the Church was based. A dividing line, with parties ranged on separate sides, may be traced from that day down to our own times.

Of the clergy deprived on March 26, 1566, some betook themselves to the study and practice of medicine, others became chaplains in the families of the puritan nobility and gentry; some went north and joined the presbyterian Church of Scotland while others emigrated to the Low Countries. It is to be feared that not a few were, with their families, reduced to sore straits of poverty. Of the remainder, not

thus accounted for, five went the length of defying the interdict placed upon them, going to their churches and preaching as aforetime. For this act of disobedience they were summoned before the Queen in Council. They were given eight days wherein to visit their friends, after which they were committed as prisoners to the private custody of certain bishops, two being sent to the bishop of Winchester, two to the bishop of Ely, and one to the bishop of Norwich.

The withdrawal of so many London ministers from their parishes naturally led to considerable embarrassment in the conduct of services. Some churches had to be closed, there being no one to officiate. To one church on Palm Sunday six hundred persons came to receive the Communion, only to find the doors shut against them. The deprived ministers on their part issued a joint manifesto explanatory of the step they had felt compelled to take. Among other things they pointed out that neither the prophets of the Old Testament nor the apostles of the New were distinguished by their garments; that the linen vestment was the mark of that priesthood of Aaron which had been superseded by Christ and His Church. Historically speaking, they maintained that the distinction of garments in the Christian Church came in when antichrist came in; for the clergy of Ravenna, writing to the emperor in 876 A.D. said to

him: 'We are distinguished from the laity not by our clothes but by our doctrines, not by our habits but by our conversation.' It was quite clear, they said, that the vestments in question had led to idolatry, had been an offence to weak Christians and an encouragement to the Romanists in the nation; and they contended that supposing these garments were indifferent, which they did not admit, that was a reason why they should not be made obligatory, this being an infringement of the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. To this manifesto a printed reply was issued from the other side commending the attention of the seceders to those words of the apostle: 'Let every soul be subject to the higher power.'

After waiting for about eight weeks, to see if there might be any relenting on the part of the Queen and the archbishop, the ministers, and those of the puritan party in the city who were in agreement with them, held solemn conference together, in which after prayer and serious debate as to the lawfulness and necessity of separation from the Established Church, they came to the following agreement: 'That since they could not have the Word of God preached, nor the Sacraments administered without idolatrous gear; and since there had been a separate congregation in London, and another in Geneva in Mary's time, using a book and

order of Service approved by Calvin, which was free from the superstitions of the English Service: therefore it was their duty, in their present circumstances, to break off from the public churches, and to assemble, as they had opportunity, in private houses or elsewhere to worship God in a manner that might not offend against the light of their consciences.' Commenting on the serious step thus taken, Strype, the English Church historian, writes thus: 'Here was the era or date of Separation: a most unhappy event whereby people of the same country, of the same religion, and of the same judgement in doctrine, parted communions; one part being obliged to go aside into secret houses and chambers, to serve God by themselves, which begat strangeness between neighbours, Christians and Protestants.'

It soon became known that there were gatherings for worship in woods and private buildings without the habits and ceremonies of the Church, whereupon the Queen sent an urgent message to the commission to take effectual steps to prevent the people leaving their parish churches, and to be careful to warn them of the consequences of frequenting separate conventicles. All the same the gatherings continued on through the winter till the following summer, when, on the 19th of June, 1567, a congregation of about a hundred people being met in Plumber's Hall for sermon and communion, the sheriffs of the city

broke in upon them, taking many into custody. The next day several of these were called to appear before Grindal, bishop of London, and the lord mayor. The bishop reminded them that by these proceedings of theirs they were in effect condemning the Reformed Church of England, and those martyrs who had shed their blood for it. To this one of them replied that they condemned not others, but felt that for themselves they must stand to God's Word. Another—'the ancientest of them,' added: 'So long as we might have the Word freely preached and the sacraments administered without the preferring of idolatrous gear about it, we never assembled together in houses. But when it came to this that all our preachers were displaced by your law, so that we could hear none of them in any church by the space of seven or eight weeks, and were troubled and commanded by your Courts from day to day for not coming to our parish churches, then we bethought us what were best to do. And now if from the Word of God you can prove we are wrong we will yield to you and do open penance at Paul's Cross: if not we will stand to it by the grace of God.' Eventually twenty-four men and seven women were committed to Bridewell prison for a twelvemonth and then released.

At this point the scene shifts from London to Cambridge and the University becomes the centre

of interest in the fortunes of puritanism. New subjects begin to be debated and new leaders come to the front. Of these leaders the foremost was Thomas Cartwright, a fellow of Trinity, who is described as a man of genius and one who would have been prominent in any age. Thomas Fuller spoke of his fame as that of 'a pure Latinist, accurate Grecian, exact Hebraist,' and Theodore Beza was of opinion that he was the most learned man he knew. In 1562, when he became a fellow, he was already known in the University as an eloquent preacher and a rising theological scholar. On the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Cambridge in 1564 he was elected to take part in the theological disputation held in her presence, and stories have come down to us of the enthusiasm he created as University preacher, the windows of St Mary's, it is said, having to be taken out that those might hear without who could not find entrance within. But what we are now more immediately concerned with is the fact that when towards the end of 1569 Dr Chaderton resigned the Lady Margaret chair and became Regius Professor of Theology, Cartwright, at the age of thirty-four, became his successor. In the fulfilment of his office as Lady Margaret professor he gave a series of lectures on the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, in the course of which he assailed the hierarchical constitution of the Church. The position he took was

that nothing should be established in the Church but what was enjoined in Scripture; that therefore the names and functions of archbishop and archdeacon should be abolished, and that the lawful ministers of the Church, bishops and deacons, should be reduced to the apostolic institution—the bishops to preach the Word of God and pray, while the deacons had the care of the poor. He held further that every church ought to be governed by its own minister and presbyters, not by the bishop's chancellor or the official of the archdeacon; and that bishops should not be created by the civil authority, but be freely chosen by the Church. On other points also he contended that no man ought to be admitted to the ministry unless he was able to preach; that as equal reverence was due to every part of Scripture and to all the revealed names of God, there is no reason why the people should stand at the reading of the gospel, or bow at the name of Jesus; that at the Communion it was as lawful to sit as to kneel or stand; that the sign of the cross in baptism is superstitious; that it is papistical to forbid marriages at certain times of the year; and that the observation of Lent and fasting on Friday is superstitious.

These, of course, were startling opinions to be uttered from a professor's chair, or worse, from the University pulpit, and Dr Whitgift, then master of Trinity, entered into the lists against Cartwright.

He also reported his proceedings to Sir William Cecil, the chancellor, and eventually in combination with the vice-chancellor and other heads of the University, he obtained a body of new statutes giving larger powers. This was in the month of August, 1570. That same month Cartwright also wrote to Cecil, assuring him that he was contending for a discipline which not only in England but also in foreign nations was accompanied by the daily prayers of pious men ; that what some men called novelties were really most ancient, and began with the Churches of Christ and His Apostles. Cecil, never an extreme churchman, urged on behalf of Cartwright that he spoke as he did, not from arrogance or ill-will, but as reader of the Scriptures had merely given notes by way of comparison between the orders of the ministry in the Apostles' time and those of the present Church of England. Whitgift and his party, however, were unwilling to take so lenient a view, and under the increased powers of the new statutes, Cartwright was first deprived of his professorship and fellowship and afterwards expelled the University. In 1573 he went abroad and became minister of the Congregation of English Merchants at Antwerp and subsequently at Middelburg in Zealand.

The third Parliament of Elizabeth, summoned in 1571, sat from April 2 to May 29, when ecclesiastical

matters were much in debate, and in the House of Commons there was a resolute and active party in sympathy with the puritans. As their spokesman, Mr Strickland, 'an ancient gentleman,' brought in a Bill on the 6th of April for the further reformation of the Church. As in a second speech, a week later, he was enforcing the provisions of this Bill, the treasurer of the Queen's household rose and reminded him that all matters of ceremonies were to be referred to the Queen, and that for the House to meddle with the royal prerogative was not convenient. Afterwards also the Queen herself, to shew her displeasure at Strickland's motion, summoned him before her presence in Council and forbade him the Parliament House. This unconstitutional invasion of the liberties of the Commons led, however, to so many protesting speeches that the Queen, having the Tudor instinct of knowing when to retreat from an untenable position, recalled the prohibition on the 20th of April. On his return to the House Strickland proceeded further and moved that a Confession of Faith be published with the authority of Parliament, as in other protestant countries. This was assented to, and a committee was appointed which drew up certain Articles, which were really those of the Convocation of 1562, with, however, certain omissions. The archbishop asked why they had left out that for the consecration of bishops and others relating to the hierarchy;

Peter Wentworth replied they had done so because they had not yet made up their minds as to whether they were agreeable to the Word of God or not. 'But surely,' said the archbishop, 'in these things you will refer yourselves wholly to us, the bishops.' With some warmth Wentworth replied that 'they meant to pass nothing they did not understand; for that would be to make the bishops into popes: make you popes who list for we will make you none.' On the 1st of May a message was received from the Queen concerning this confirmation of the Articles of 1562: 'The Queen's Majesty ... mindeth to publish these and have them executed by the bishops, by direction of her Highness' Regal Authority of Supremacy of the Church of England; and not to have them dealt in by Parliament.' Unmoved by this rebuke, the Commons, two days later, sent up to the Lords a 'Bill for the ministers of the Church to be of sound religion.' This when passed became the important Act of 13 Eliz. cap. xii., under which subscription to the Articles was first required. Before Christmas next following, every minister under the degree of a bishop was 'to declare his assent and subscribe to all the Articles of Religion which only concern the confession of the true Christian faith and the doctrine of the sacraments comprised in the book of 1562, and bring from the bishop, in writing, under his seal authentic, proof of such assent and

subscription.' If he did not comply within the given time, he 'shall be *ipso facto* deprived, and all his ecclesiastical promotions shall be void, as if he then were naturally dead.'

In addition to the demand for subscription to the Articles, which was a new thing, the Commissioners Ecclesiastical, when the parliamentary session was over, issued an order on the 7th of June to all churchwardens to the effect that they were in no wise to suffer any minister to minister any sacrament or say public prayers other than according to the Book of Common Prayer, and not thus unless his license to preach is dated after the 1st of May last. In the convocation of this year a Book of Canons was made, one of the requirements of which was that every bishop should, before September next, call before him all the clergy of his diocese, and require of them their faculties for preaching under authentic seal, only giving back these licenses to such ministers as he approved. Before, however, any licenses could be restored the ecclesiastical vestments were to be enforced. Upon refusal a minister was to resign quietly or be deprived. In pursuance of these orders the archbishop, early in June, cited some of the leading puritans to Lambeth, Lever, Sampson, Goodman, Walker and Wiborne being among them; the same month Robert Browne, at that time chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk, and sometimes spoken of since

as the founder of the Brownists, was also cited. In the northern province Whittingham and Gilby came under observation. Details of what happened in all cases have not come down to us, but it is said that through the action of the commissioners at this time about one hundred ministers suffered deprivation. Browne, Harrison, and others went beyond sea to Zealand; and there is a curious document among the State Papers of this period (1566—1573) containing a proposal for transplanting the precisians, to the number of 3000 men, to Ireland, assigning them a portion of Ulster, 'there, as concerning religion, to live according to the reformation of the best churches.'

Parliament met again on the 8th of May, 1572, the lord keeper making the opening speech, in which, in the Queen's name, he recommended the Houses to see the laws relating to the Church carried into effect and to enact other laws, if needful, for that purpose. Instead, however, of making new laws for the enforcement of ceremonies, two Bills were introduced for their regulation, in one of which it was proposed to redress certain grievances complained of by the puritans. Both these Bills passed the Commons and were referred to a select committee of both Houses. The Queen again resented this interference, as she regarded it, and through the speaker informed the Commons that it was her pleasure that no Bills on

religion should be received without previous consent from the bishops, and she commanded that the two Bills concerning rites and ceremonies should be delivered up. Peter Wentworth again protested against this infringement of the liberty and free speech of Parliament. 'Her Majesty,' he said, 'has forbidden us to deal with any matter of religion till we first receive it from the bishops. Then there is little hope of reformation. I have heard an old Parliament man say that the banishment of the pope, and the reforming of the true religion had its beginning from this House, not from the bishops.' For this outspoken utterance of his Wentworth was sent to the Tower.

It was at this time the puritans entered upon a new and important departure in their line of policy. Having lost all hope of effecting such reformation as they desired by appealing to the Queen or the bishops, they resolved to make their appeal to Parliament itself. At a meeting of the leaders held in London it was resolved to draw up a manifesto, which is now known as the First Admonition to Parliament. It was published anonymously in 1572, but was admitted to be the work of John Field, the minister of Alderbury, in conjunction with Thomas Wilcocks; and Strype records that it was so eagerly read that it went through four editions before the end of 1573. This manifesto is historically important as being

a clear and deliberate declaration of what the puritans had in view at this stage in the development of their scheme of reformation. The Admonition began by asserting in the preface that till there was a right ministry of God and a right government of His Church there could be no right religion. They, therefore, present for the godly consideration of Parliament a true platform of a Church reformed. It would be seen that radical changes were needed, for as yet 'we are scarce come to the outward face of the same. Those who were priests under Henry VIII and Mary ought to be removed, for they are still the Romanists at heart they always were. Then, when better men are sought, there ought to be an election of the minister by the elders with the common consent of the whole church. He should be *called* by the congregation, not thrust upon them by the bishop, or ordained without a title, and should be admitted to his function by the laying on of the hands of the eldership only. The officers of a church are chiefly three—ministers or pastors, elders and deacons. As for the elders not only their office but their very name has been removed out of the English Church, and in their stead we yet maintain the lordship of one man over many churches, yea over sundry shires. If you would restore the Church to her ancient officers this you must do: Instead of an archbishop or lord bishop you must make equality

of ministers; instead of chancellors, archdeacons, officials, commissaries, proctors, summoners, churchwardens and such like you have to plant a lawful and godly eldership. To these three jointly—ministers, elders and deacons—is the whole government of the Church to be committed. Amend therefore these abuses and reform God's Church and the Lord is on your right hand: let these things alone, and God who is a righteous judge will one day call you to your reckoning. Is a reformation good for France and can it be evil for England? Is discipline meet for Scotland and is it unprofitable for this realm? The right government of the Church cannot be separated from the doctrine of the Church.'

The writers were conscious that the work Parliament was thus called upon to undertake was no light task:—'Your wisdoms have to remove advowsons, patronages, impropriations and bishops' authority and to bring in the old and true election which was accustomed to be made by the congregation. Remove homilies, articles, injunctions, and that prescript order of service made out of the Mass book; take away the lordship, the loitering, the pomp, the idleness and livings of bishops, but yet employ them to such ends as they were in the old Church appointed for.'

Such in brief was the drift of the First Ad-

monition, which produced a great sensation on its appearance in print. Its authors were at once committed to Newgate, and several of the bishops assailed the book as foolish as well as dangerous, to which a writer of the time replied that 'foolish it may be, but it is still unanswered, and though there are scarce as many leaves in it as there are months past since it came forth, it is fleeing as a firebrand from place to place and setting all the country on fire.' At length it was decided to send forth an answer, which at the request of the primate was undertaken by Dr Whitgift with the assistance of two of the bishops. This work has been described as 'a learned answer,' and an 'excellent book, containing a very satisfactory vindication of the Church of England.' Its two main positions are that we are not bound of necessity to keep to the same form of church government as obtained in the time of the Apostles and that it is unreasonable to maintain that we may not retain anything in the English Church simply because it was to be found in the Roman Church previously. This reply by Whitgift was published in 1573, and called forth a Second Admonition, which is admitted to be from the pen of Thomas Cartwright, and in which he went over Whitgift's argument point by point. The First Admonition having set forth what should be reformed, this points out how the work of reformation ought to

be carried out. He suggests that a sufficient maintenance for the ministry should be provided so that every parish may have a preaching pastor; and that the statutes should be repealed which make the ministry partly to consist of lords spiritual, making one minister higher than another. For Christ most severely forbade His Apostles and successors all claims of primacy and dominion and gave an equal power and function to all the ministers of the Church. He suggests among other arrangements a series of ecclesiastical assemblies or conferences. 'A conference,' he says, 'I call the meeting of some certain ministers and other brethren to confer and exercise themselves in prophesying or interpreting the Scriptures. At which conferences any one or any certain of the brethren are at the order of the whole to be employed upon some affairs of the Church; and where the demeanours of the ministers may be examined and rebuked.' He further suggests the setting up of a synod provincial, that is, a meeting of certain of the consistory of every parish within a province, where great causes of the churches which could not be ended in their own consistories or conferences shall be heard and determined. From a provincial synod there might be an appeal to a national synod; and from this again to a more general synod of all churches.

From these larger arrangements he passes to

the question of the local consistory which there should be in every congregation, consisting of the ministers and elders, or assistants whom the parish shall consent upon and choose, and upon whom, when chosen, the minister may lay his hands to testify to them their admission. The powers of the consistory were those of rebuke, and, if need arose, of excommunication. It was theirs also to abolish unprofitable ceremonies used in place of prayer, to put a stop to lewd customs either in games or otherwise, to exercise supervision over the relief of the poor, and to send representatives to a provincial or national council. He concludes with an appeal to the Queen, the council, the nobility and the commons to give the case a fair hearing or procure a free conference on the matter. The Queen especially is besought to take the defence of this movement upon her, and to fortify it by law. For though all orders should first of all be drawn from the Book of God, 'yet it is her Majesty that by her princely authority should see every of these things put in practice, and punish those that neglect them.'

In these two Admonitions addressed to Parliament we have what may be described as the puritans' platform, the ecclesiastical system they would have brought about in England if they could. The effect they had upon the Queen was to excite her anger and to cause her to reprimand the bishops for not

suppressing these men. Commissions were appointed under the Great Seal in every shire to put the penal laws into execution by way of Oyer and Terminer, and in the month of October she issued a proclamation requiring all offenders against the Act of Uniformity to be rigorously dealt with. Yet in spite of this, and about the same time, there were started certain voluntary associations which did much to prepare the minds of the people to look with favour upon the puritan discipline. One of these was held in the town of Northampton and was not regarded as being contrary to the Act of Uniformity. Strype describes it as 'a very commendable reformation instituted and established for Religion and good manners,' and tells us that it was approved of by Dr Scambler, the bishop of Peterborough. The ministers of the town, together with the mayor and the justices of the county met and agreed upon certain regulations for worship and discipline. Among other things it was decided that every Tuesday and Thursday there should be a lecture in the chief church of the town beginning with the confession and ending with prayer and a confession of faith; and that every Sunday evening the youth of the town should be instructed and examined in a portion of Calvin's Catechism. Altogether there were thirteen items in these arrangements, the last of which provided that excessive ringing of bells on the Lord's

day should be prohibited, also the carrying of the bell before a corpse in the street, and bidding prayers for the dead.

Besides these voluntary associations, which were intended for the benefit of the laity, the clergy with the approval of the bishop set up a series of religious exercises which they called Prophesyings. This term took its rise from the passage in 1 Corinthians xiv. 31, 'Ye may all prophecy one by one, that all may learn, and all be comforted.' They were intended to advance the knowledge of the Scriptures among the clergy themselves, some of whom were but ill-instructed in sacred learning. They also conferred among themselves touching sound doctrine and good life and manners. There was a moderator appointed and three speakers, the first of whom after offering prayer should unfold a given passage of Scripture, set aside misapplications and then make a practical reflection, 'but not dilate to a commonplace.' The president should then call upon the rest of the brethren for their judgement on the matter. At a time when theological training was but little known we may well accept the judgement of Strype, the Church historian, on these gatherings when he calls the Prophesyings 'a well-minded and religiously disposed combination of both bishop, magistrates and people, designed to stir up an emulation in the clergy to study the Scriptures, that they might be more

capable of instructing the people in Christian knowledge.'

Besides the county of Northampton these exercises were carried on also in the diocese of Norwich where they were regarded with favour by the bishop. But the Queen disliked them. They were not part of her arrangement for the Church, therefore not to be borne. Hearing that the discussions sometimes turned upon what was the scriptural form of church government, and that the laity had actually taken part in them, she sent peremptory orders to the archbishop to have them stopped. Parker communicated this order at once to Parkhurst, bishop of Norwich. But Parkhurst, who had been one of the protestant exiles himself in Mary's time, and had considerable sympathy with puritan ideas, demurred. He said that the Prophesyings brought 'singular benefit to the Church of God, as well in the clergy as in the laity, and was a right necessary exercise to be continued, so the same were not abused.' One or two irregularities had prevailed but he had put a stop to them, 'since which time he had not heard but all things had succeeded quietly, without offence to any.' The archbishop chafed at this, and chafed still more when he discovered that the bishop of Norwich had communicated his order to certain members of the Privy Council and had received a letter from four members of that Council encouraging him to resist-

ance. In this letter they say that having heard 'that certain good exercises of Prophesying and expounding of Scriptures at Holt and other places in Norfolk whereby both Speakers and hearers do profit much in the knowledge of the Word of God...these are to require your Lordship, that so long as the Truth is godly and reverently uttered in this Prophesying, and that no seditious, heretical or schismatical doctrine can be proved to be taught, so good a help and means to true religion, may not be hindered and stayed, but may proceed and go forward to God's glory.' But when the Queen heard of this interference with what was really her own command, an enquiry was made as to what their warrant was? Parker's biographer sums up the matter briefly telling us that another letter came from the archbishop to the bishop of Norwich which was followed immediately by one from the bishop of Norwich to the chancellor of his diocese, saying: 'I am commanded by my Lord of Canterbury in the Queen her Majesty's name, that the Prophesyings throughout my diocese should be suppressed,' and suppressed they were accordingly. The archbishop ended the correspondence by this caustic piece of advice:—'My Lord, be not you led by fantastical folk. Do not take such men to counsel, as, when they have endangered you, cannot bring you out of trouble. Of my care I have to you and to the

Diocese I write thus much.' This little episode lifts the veil for us for a moment from the inner working of the Church, making plain the fact that the supreme and shaping power was not the bishops, or the Privy Council or even the archbishop, but the great Tudor Queen whose dominion was absolute and whose will was law. Within eight months of the receipt of that letter Bishop Parkhurst went the way of all the earth, whither, in three months time, he was followed by the archbishop himself, upon which a further chapter in the history of puritan Prophesyings is opened to us.

On the death of Parker, Archbishop Grindal was transferred from York to Canterbury. But the increase of dignity in his case meant increase of sorrow. He had done what he could to foster the Prophesyings and to keep them free from any cause of complaint in his northern province, intending to take the same course in that of Canterbury. This brought him into conflict with the Queen, who sent for him. She was informed, she said, that the rites and ceremonies of the Church were not duly observed in these prophesyings; that persons not lawfully called to be ministers exercised in them; these assemblies she maintained were illegal not being allowed by public authority; the laity neglected their business in going to these meetings; in short she commanded him peremptorily to put them down. It was good for the Church, she added, to have but

few preachers, three or four in a county were quite sufficient. Now was he at a point, for he was painfully conscious of the need of enlightenment on the part of the people. When he went to his northern province he was appalled at their ignorance and superstition. The remains of the old Roman teaching were seen in their customs at the burial of the dead, and in their praying with beads. It seemed to him to be another religion, rather than that of the Reformed Church of England, which he found there. As Dr Paget, the late bishop of Oxford, has well said: 'It is easy to laugh at the puritan exaltation of sermons, at their vehement denunciation of an unpreaching ministry; but it is unjust to forget the greatness and the persistence of the neglect which they denounced.' Figures and formal documents from time to time shew the strength of their case. In 1561 it was found that in the archdeaconry of London there were ministers who held three, some four, and one five, livings together. Strype reports that there was one minister who was vicar of St Dunstan's West and held at the same time the following livings: Whiston and Doncaster in Yorkshire, Rugby in Warwickshire, and Barnet in Middlesex. And when, in 1586, the puritans made a survey of the parishes they found in the 160 parishes of Cornwall only 29 preachers, in the 210 of Buckinghamshire only 30, in the 335 of Essex

only 12; and altogether in 10,000 parish churches only 2000.

Such was the spiritual destitution of England at the time on the one side, and on the other, the resolute determination of the Queen to suppress those studies and exercises which in the archbishop's opinion might go some way in providing a remedy. As we gather, reading between the lines of his letter to the Queen dated December 20, 1576, she at their personal interview was passionate and stormful; 'her speeches sounded very hardly against mine own person, exceedingly dismayed and discomforted me.' He further implies that she would not listen to what he had to say in his own defence—'It was not your Majesty's pleasure then, to hear me at any length'; he therefore gave his answer in writing. After asserting his unchanging loyalty, and the absence of any desire on his part to offend her Majesty, he says it is only his duty to God which makes him refuse to suppress the preachers and the exercises. For public and continual preaching of God's word is the ordinary means and instrument of salvation of mankind; by this the glory of God is enlarged, faith is nourished and charity increased. He has been careful only to admit competent men to the office, no man professing either papistry or puritanism, generally only graduates of the University, except some few who have excellent gifts of knowledge in

the Scriptures, joined with good utterance and godly persuasion. He had himself within six years procured above forty learned preachers and graduates within the province of York besides those he found there. As to the Prophesyings, he has consulted other bishops who think as he does, that they are a thing profitable to the Church, and therefore expedient to be continued. He explains at length what was done at these gatherings and under what conditions, and gives his final determination thus: 'I am forced with all humility, and yet plainly to profess that I cannot with safe conscience, and without the offence of the Majesty of God, give my assent to the suppressing of the said exercises. If it be your Majesty's pleasure to remove me out of this place, I will in all humility yield thereunto, and render again to your Majesty that I received of the same. He who acts against his conscience builds for hell. And what should I win, if I gained (I will not say a bishopric, but) the whole world, and lose mine own soul?'

The proud Tudor spirit of Elizabeth resented the faithfulness of this English Ambrose. Offended at this plain speaking she resolved to have him suspended and sequestered. As though she were archbishop herself, setting him aside, she sent her own commandment by her letters direct to the rest of the bishops, to put down these exercises. From that

hour to the day of his death, seven years later, so far as his office as archbishop was concerned, he was practically a dead man. He was confined to his own house and sequestered for six months. Members of the Privy Council pleaded for him, and the bishops of his province besought his restoration to office, but in vain. At the end of the six months he was summoned before the Star Chamber, and there lectured and humiliated for his disobedience. He still remained sequestered and the duties of his office were placed in commission. There was some talk of actual deprivation, but stopping short of this he remained under the Queen's displeasure for the rest of his days. As these seven years passed slowly away, blindness came down upon the old man, and, tormented as he was besides by a painful disease, he sighed for that release which came at length on the 6th of July, 1583, in his seventy-third year. The Queen's despotic treatment of the highest ecclesiastical officer in the State is the most striking illustration of that absolute dominion she exercised always over the Church and by which she made it what it has since remained.

# IV

## PRESBYTERY IN EPISCOPACY

THE succession of Whitgift to Grindal in 1583, as archbishop of Canterbury, had much to do with the deepening and embitterment of the puritan conflict within the Church's borders. The earlier bishops of Elizabeth's reign, Grindal, Parkhurst of Norwich, Jewell of Salisbury, Pilkington of Durham, Sandys of London, Horn of Winchester, and Cox of Ely, were not unfriendly to puritan ideas, indeed, had the Queen permitted, would have made large concessions to them. For, as we know, they had themselves been exiles for protestantism among the Reformed Churches of Switzerland and the Upper Rhine. The advent of Whitgift to Canterbury, of Aylmer to London and Freke to Norwich, meant more than an ordinary change in the episcopate. It meant that the Queen had now those to her hand who would readily work her will. There was a time when it seemed as if Whitgift would have thrown in his lot with the puritan party. For in 1565, as fellow of Trinity and Lady Margaret professor he signed the

petition to the chancellor against the revival of the papal vestments. But when in 1569 Cartwright created a stir in the University by assailing the hierarchical constitution of the Church, he at once entered the lists against him, reported his teachings to the chancellor, and joined the movement for obtaining new statutes, under the powers of which Cartwright was deprived of his Lectureship and expelled the University. In 1571, again, he was chosen to reply to the First Admonition of Field and Wilcocks, and also to the Second by Cartwright.

Thus when Whitgift came to be archbishop he was already in full sympathy with the Queen in her dislike of puritan ideas. He was with her also in her love of pomp and stately show. No ecclesiastic since Cardinal Wolsey had departed so far from puritan simplicity of life. Sir George Paule, the comptroller of his household, tells us that 'he had a desire always to keep a great and bountiful House,' that 'upon some chief Festival days he was served with great solemnity upon the knee for the upholding of the state that belonged unto his place.' He relates also how that 'at his first journey into Kent he rode to Dover being attended by at least a hundred of his own servants in livery, whereof there were forty gentlemen in chains of gold.' He further tells us that as every third year he rode into Kent he was not only attended by his own train of two hundred

persons, but also with the gentlemen of the county, so 'that he did sometimes ride into the city of Canterbury and into other towns with eight hundred or a thousand Horse.'

On his advancement to his new position the Queen charged him to restore the discipline of the Church and the Uniformity established by law which, said she, 'through the connivance of some prelates, the obstinacy of the puritans and the power of some noblemen is run out of square.' He readily fell into line with the royal wishes. The week after his confirmation at Lambeth he issued to the bishops of his province certain Articles which were aimed both against recusants and puritans. Those specially bearing upon the latter required, (1) That none be permitted to read and preach and catechise in the Church unless he do, four times a year at least, minister the sacraments according to the Book of Common Prayer; (2) That all preachers do at all times wear and use such kind of apparel as is prescribed by the Book of Advertisements and her Majesty's Injunctions; and (3) That none be admitted unless he subscribe Articles (*a*) asserting the Queen's supremacy over all causes ecclesiastical as well as civil; (*b*) declaring that the Book of Common Prayer contains nothing contrary to the Word of God, he promising to use no other form of service; and (*c*) avowing acceptance of the Thirty-nine Articles of 1562.

After the promulgation of these Articles the archbishop carried out a Metropolitical Visitation to see them enforced. The first appearance of serious opposition was in his own diocese of Kent where some twenty ministers refused to subscribe. They were willing, they said, to subscribe to the Prayer Book, so far as it was not contrary to the Word of God, but they were not prepared to say there was nothing in the book contrary thereto, and they proceeded to indicate several things they regarded as imperfect. They also stated their objections to the observance of Saints' Days, and to the public reading of the Apocrypha, and they desired that the attire of ministers might be as in the second year of Edward VI. They further thought that the length of the Litany unduly hindered the sermon, that the prayers were over long, and they could not agree that children were really regenerated and necessarily saved by being baptized. On matters of church polity also they held equally decided views, objecting to the creation of superior clergy, and contending that archbishops, bishops and priests were inventions of men, the practical effect of which was to deface the true Word of God. They noted the omission of Elders such as those recognised in the New Testament, and contended that the people in every church ought to have right and liberty to choose their own ministers. Notwithstanding this statement

of their views, however, they were still called upon to subscribe the new Articles, and refusing to do so, were pronounced contumacious, and required to answer at law in February following.

The same proceedings occurred elsewhere. In Norfolk alone, 64 parish ministers were suspended, and in Suffolk 60. In the six counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent, Lincoln and Sussex, no fewer than 233 of the clergy were placed under interdict; those in Kent making formal appeal to the Privy Council against the archbishop's decision. There was also another part of his administration against which serious protest was made. In December, 1583, he established in more permanent and oppressive form the Court of High Commission, whose methods of investigation were described as worthy only of the Spanish Inquisition. A man might be called before this Court, without a charge and without an accuser, and there have the Oath *ex officio* administered to him, compelling him to reveal whatsoever he knew, whether of himself or anyone else. If he refused the oath he was at once committed to prison, simply for refusing. The names are given of twenty-five men confined in the gaols of London for ecclesiastical offences, who were there without warrant, and for months together without trial. They were treated as convicted criminals, were sometimes cruelly beaten and cast into 'Little Ease,' and some of them died in

prison. This Court went on its evil way for half a century and more. It trespassed on competing jurisdictions, became in time one of the chief engines of Archbishop Laud's oppressions, and lasting on till the Long Parliament, was finally abolished by an Act with this ignominious clause—'that no such jurisdiction should be revived for the future in any Court whatsoever.'

The year after the enlargement of the powers of the High Commission a series of searching Interrogatories was drawn up at Lambeth for the purpose of ascertaining how far the clergy were, or were not, obedient to the Act of Uniformity. They were twenty-four in all, covered every conceivable aspect of church life, and were so minute that it was next to impossible for a man to escape censure or conviction. Several of the clergy brought these questions to the notice of the Lord Treasurer whom they had come to look upon as their friend. At once he wrote to the archbishop protesting: 'I have read these Articles of Enquiry,' he said, 'and find them so curiously penned, so full of branches and circumstances, as I think the Inquisition of Spain use not so many questions to comprehend and entrap their preyes... My good Lord, bear with my scribbling. I desire the peace of the Church. I desire concord and unity in the exercise of our Religion. According to my simple judgement this kind of proceeding savours too

much of the Romish Inquisition, and is rather a device to seek for offenders than to reform any.'

While the archbishop was thus enforcing subscription and multiplying Interrogatories against the puritans, they on their part were preparing to carry out more effectually a plan of campaign for securing the changes and reforms they deemed to be so needful for the spiritual welfare of the Church. They had no intention of separating from the Church. That was far indeed from their purpose, which was rather to bring about from within such changes as would make its government conform more nearly to what they regarded as the Scriptural idea. According to Thomas Fuller their 'grand design was to set up a discipline within a discipline, Presbytery in Episcopacy.' The hierarchical system seemed to them to be foreign to New Testament teaching, and their object was to substitute a government of pastors and ruling elders for that of archbishops and bishops, chancellors and archdeacons; and also to organise the parishes of England into a connected system of presbyteries, synods, and assemblies provincial and general.

To us, after centuries of established episcopacy, this scheme of theirs would have seemed daring and impossible. But not so to them. They were within fifty years of the time when a far greater revolution had been possible; when the English Church was

first severed from the See of Rome, and its bishops from the authority of the pope. In the eyes of all Europe that was a tremendous step to take, yet it was taken. It was taken again on the Accession of Elizabeth, and in 1570 confirmed by her solemn and formal excommunication, and that of her clergy, by the Bull of Pope Pius V. So that though the bishops were still there, their allegiance to the pope was no more. Whence then did they derive their authority? It was certainly not from the Scriptures, for there bishop and presbyter were equivalent terms denoting equality of rank. And it is further to be specially noted that up to this time the claim of divine right for Episcopacy had not been even suggested, much less formulated. It was Dr Bancroft, in his sermon at St Paul's Cross in 1588, who first put forward this claim, and then rather as a counterclaim to that of the presbyterians who asserted divine right for their system. And when it was put forward, even the archbishop himself said he wished he could believe it, which he evidently did not. To shew the novelty of the claim, we find Lord Burleigh referring the matter to Dr Hammond, chancellor of the diocese of London for his opinion. His reply under date November 4, 1588, has been preserved among the Cecil MSS. in which he says that the name of a bishop, as of an office having superiority over many churches is not to be found in the Scriptures, the

names of *episcopus* and *presbyter* importing one function. He concludes with these decisive words: 'The Bysshopps of our realm do not (so farre as I ever yet hearde), nor may not, clayme to themselves any other authorytie than is geeven them by the statute of the 25 of Kynge Henry the 8, recited in the fyrst yeare of her Majesty's raygne, neither is it reasonable they should make other clayme, for if it had pleased her Majesty, with the wysdome of the realme to have used no bysshopps at all, we could not have complayned justly of any defect in our Churche.' If such were the views of leading churchmen at that time, it is not surprising if men with puritan ideas felt themselves justified in thinking that ruling elders or presbyters might be substituted for bishops without any great violation of the spiritual order of the universe. Moreover the Church of England, since the Reformation, had regarded the Reformed Churches of the Continent as Sister Churches, and *they* had no bishops. And, what was still more to the purpose, Scotland also, under the influence of John Knox, had quite recently set aside episcopacy altogether, and established presbyterianism as the national form of church government.

These were weighty considerations, 'but,' to quote the earnest words of Dr Paget, the late bishop of Oxford, 'nothing surely, can have contributed so

much to the opportunities, the power, the zeal, the hopes of puritans as did the neglect of duty in the Church. At such a time ignorance and inability among the clergy were serious enough, but avarice and plain indifference to the meaning of a spiritual change were far worse.' There was many 'a parish whose minister could only struggle through the service, never preached, but read, perhaps four purchased sermons in the course of the year, or, it may be, had never resided in the place at all, and, had he done so, might only have made matters worse by the example of his vicious life.'

It will be remembered that the puritan scheme had been set forth by Field and Wilcocks in the First Admonition to Parliament of 1572. Two years later there appeared a yet more important and scholarly treatise, the famous *Ecclesiasticae Disciplinae et Anglicanae Ecclesiae...explicatio.* This work was first printed anonymously at Rochelle, a city which after the Huguenot Massacre of 1572 became the chief rendezvous of the French protestants, and where freedom of worship had been secured by treaty. Though issued without author's name it was known to be the production of Walter Travers, a fellow of Trinity, who after residing abroad became domestic chaplain to Lord Burghley and tutor to his son Robert Cecil. In 1581, on his lordship's recommendation he was appointed Afternoon Lecturer at

the Temple Church, and by arrangement of the Benchers remained in this position after Richard Hooker was appointed Master. The writer of Hooker's Life reports that the morning sermon spoke the language of Canterbury, the afternoon that of Geneva. The church was crowded by lawyers deeply interested in the controversy, and, as Thomas Fuller tells us, 'Some say the congregation ebbed in the morning and flowed in the afternoon,' till a prohibition was served upon Travers in 1586. This man, then, was the author of the *Ecclesiastica Disciplina*, the most memorable book on the puritan side. It originally appeared in 1574 in two forms, Latin and English, and a second edition of the English translation was printed in Geneva in 1580. The more important and conspicuous issue of the book, however, was in 1584, the year of Whitgift's Articles and Interrogatories. In that year, after more than fifty years of abeyance, the Cambridge University Press was re-established, and one of its earliest issues was a revised English version of this treatise by Travers. On this Whitgift took alarm and on the 30th of June wrote to the chancellor in earnest remonstrance. 'Ever since they had a Printing Press in Cambridge he greatly feared,' he said, 'that this and such inconveniences would follow.' At his instigation the greater part of the printed impression was seized and destroyed. Still to some extent the book got into circulation

and apart from its importance as the puritan manifesto, from a literary point of view it has historical significance as being the treatise to which Hooker's great work on Ecclesiastical Polity was written as a reply.

The purpose of Travers was to discuss the proper calling, conduct, knowledge, apparel and maintenance of a minister of religion; the offices of the doctor or teacher, the bishops, pastors and elders, and also the functions of the consistory. He began by shewing the interdependence of doctrine and discipline. The danger of the Church of England, he maintained, was that doctrine was severed from discipline, and as a consequence the reformation thus far effected was incomplete and insecure; discipline being left unreformed, the reform of doctrine was precarious. What was needed now, therefore, was a new reformation dealing with the discipline of the Church. And the first thing to be done was to make a clean sweep of the Canon Law out of which (as out of a Trojan horse) have come archbishops, lord bishops, chancellors, archdeacons and the like, by whom the Church has been taken and enslaved. This accomplished, then let the true and right discipline be established, based upon the one essential principle of puritanism which is that the Word of God is to be the authority, and that nothing be admitted save what can be confirmed by the voice and witness of God Himself.

This manifesto was issued from the Cambridge Press in the early summer of 1584, and on the 23rd of November following, Parliament again met for the despatch of business. The puritans were still sanguine of obtaining some advance in the practical achievement of their ideals, for in the House of Commons as well as in the Privy Council there was a strong element in their favour. Their agents, Fuller tells us, were about the doors of the House all day, and making interest in the chambers of parliament men in the evening. On the 14th of December, three petitions were presented to the House, for liberty to godly preachers, restoration to office of those set aside, and for a speedy supply of able men for destitute parishes. At this point Dr Turner rose and reminded the members of a Bill and a Book he on a former occasion had offered to the House: the Bill providing that no other form of subscription be required of ministers than that enjoined by the Act of 1571, and that no man presented by the lawful patron should be refused institution by the bishop except for obstinately defending heresies condemned by the Word of God. The Book offered along with the Bill consisted of thirty-four Articles, which by the advice of ministers had been reduced to sixteen, and these he desired might be submitted to the House of Lords and they be requested to join the Commons in exhibiting them in humble suit to the Queen. These

sixteen Articles, presented in the form of a petition, were against insufficient ministers; in favour of parishes trying and allowing their pastors; against ministers being called to account by commissioners and officials instead of by the bishops themselves; in favour of six ministers being associated with the bishop in every ordination; for the restoration of deprived ministers; against excommunications *ex officio mero*; for permission to hold religious exercises and conferences in every archdeaconry under direction of the bishop; and for the removal of all non-residences and pluralities from the Church.

With some alterations and omissions this Book of Petitions was committed and approved, and was, soon after, presented by the Commons to the Lords. The answer of the Lords, as reported to the Lower House by Sir Francis Knollys, was to the effect that many of the Articles were regarded as unnecessary and others of them were already provided for; and as to the uniformity of Common Prayer which the petitioners wished to be left to the discretion of the minister, that had been established by Parliament. Both the archbishops spoke against the petition, and both also afterwards gave their reasons at length in writing.

This appeal being without effect, the Commons introduced other bills, among them being one against pluralities and non-residence, and one in favour of

the right of appeal from the Ecclesiastical Courts to a higher tribunal. These passed the Lower House but were opposed and lost in the Lords. Undeterred by this additional defeat, the Commons resumed debate on certain other Bills intended to limit the power of the spiritual courts and also the jurisdiction of the prelates. Archbishop Whitgift, alarmed by the passing of two of these, wrote at once to the Queen informing her that, notwithstanding her recent charge to the Commons forbidding discussion on matters relating to religion, they had passed one Bill relating to the ministry, and another giving liberty to marry at all times of the year, contrary to the ancient Canons. At once a message came from the Queen to the Commons reprimanding them for thus encroaching on her supremacy, and commanding the Speaker 'to see that no Bills concerning Reformation in Ecclesiastical Causes be exhibited, and should they be exhibited that they be not read.'

Still, in spite of this remonstrance, the Commons introduced a Bill for further reformation, and what was more, connected with the Bill a proposed form of service entitled 'A Booke of the Forme of Common Prayers, Administration of the Sacraments, etc., agreeable to God's Worde, and the Use of the Reformed Churches,' which it was proposed to substitute for the one already in use. On motion being made for the reading of this book the speaker

reminded them that the Queen had already commanded the House not to meddle with such matters, since she herself had promised to take order therein, he therefore advised them to refrain. This raised a storm, and the House being still resolved to have the book read, the speaker rose and more decisively declared such reading to be out of order, the book prescribing a new form of administration to the discredit of the Book of Common Prayer. It could only have the effect of rousing her Majesty's indignation against them. Therein he rightly judged, for though the book was not read, but only proposed to be, the Queen sent a message demanding both the petition and the book, and ordering such of the members as had shewn zeal in the matter to be sent prisoners to the Tower. Nor was this all. In her speech, when dismissing Parliament at the end of the session, she returned to this interference with her prerogative, as she regarded it. There was one thing, she said, that touched her so near that she might not overskip, namely, religion. To find fault with the order of the clergy was virtually to slander both her and the Church whose overlooker she was. If schisms or errors heretical were suffered the negligence would be hers, and could not be excused. After charging the bishops, she turned to those who were bent on further reformation, saying that she saw many overbold with God Almighty, making too

many scannings of His blessed Will, as lawyers did with human testaments. This presumption was so great that she might not suffer it. She was minded neither to animate Romanists nor tolerate new-fangleness, but to guide both by God's true rule. Such was the Queen's determination, and it was the memory of such interference with the liberties of Parliament as these that led Hume the historian, who had no great liking for puritans, to say: 'So absolute indeed was the authority of the Crown that the precious spark of liberty had been *kindled* and was *preserved* by the puritans *alone*; and it was to this sect that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution.'

Finding that nothing was to be looked for from appeals to Parliament, the puritan clergy within the Church resolved to take steps themselves for a practical carrying out of the church discipline they held to be more scriptural. As early as 1572, in the November after the Bartholomew Massacre in Paris of the previous August, they had set up a congregation after the presbyterian model at Wandsworth, then a mere village on the banks of the Thames. Some fifteen ministers from London and from the neighbourhood of Wandsworth were the leaders of this movement, there being associated with them a considerable number of influential laymen. At their meeting on the 20th of November eleven elders, or

presbyters, were chosen and their orders described as 'the Orders of Wandsworth.' This organisation has sometimes been described as the first presbyterian church in England. Strictly speaking, however, it was rather an association within the borders of the Established Church than an organised separation from it. The proceedings of this community were carried on with great secrecy, so much so that though the commissioners knew of its existence they were unable to find out who belonged to it. Besides this organised movement at Wandsworth, separate communities were established for the observance of the Lord's Supper, those joining in them signing a common declaration to the effect that they wished to unite themselves in prayer and hearing with those who renounced the idolatries of the Church, notwithstanding the danger incurred by not coming to their own parish churches. Each of those who signed also personally assented to these solemn words: 'Having joined myself to the Church of Christ I have yielded myself to the discipline of God's Word which, if I again forsake, I should be forsaking the Union wherein I am knit to the body of Christ.'

In 1575 a step forward was taken by the establishment of the presbyterian discipline in the Channel Islands. After the massacre in Paris in 1572 many French protestants fled to these islands for safety, and were, by the lords of the council, allowed to

retain the Genevan or French form of service to which they had been accustomed. Representatives from various districts met at St Peter's Port, Guernsey, when the draft of a form of church discipline was duly discussed and adapted to the use of the islands. This was agreed upon the following year at a synod held in Guernsey, June, 1576, and was afterwards confirmed at a later synod held in Jersey in October, 1577. Meantime the puritans on the mainland kept up their Associations and private assemblies. The two counties of Warwick and Northampton were especially forward in the movement. An important meeting was held at Cockfield in Suffolk, when sixty ministers from Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire came together in conference, to determine what in the use of the Prayer Book might be tolerated and what refused. This meeting stood adjourned to Cambridge at the next Commencement, and afterwards from thence to London. The result of these three synodical gatherings was embodied in certain conclusions, formally drawn up by Cartwright and Travers, the object of which was the introduction of important changes in the organisation and worship of the National Church which should yet not mean separation from that Church. Churches were to be arranged in classical, provincial and national synods; ministers should be called to the pastorate, first of all, by the churches they were to serve, and this

call be approved by the local classic meeting in conference; and then the minister, so called and so approved, should by letters be commended to the bishop for ordination. Churchwardens and collectors for the poor could be turned into elders and deacons without disturbing the present arrangement. In the matter of subscription to the Articles and Book of Common Prayer, if this should be again urged, it was decided that it might be consented to only in accordance with the statute of 1571 which limited subscription to such Articles only as contain the sum of the Christian faith and the doctrine of the Sacraments. Subscription to the Prayer Book and to the rest of the Articles should be resisted even though a man should be deprived of his ministry for refusing. Beyond these arrangements a more extended form of organisation was also resolved upon. The shire of Northampton, for example, was arranged in three separate classes, held in the towns of Northampton, Daventry and Kettering. A provincial synod of these classes was also convened in the town of Northampton, and similar gatherings held in other counties, especially Warwickshire, Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex. It was further ordered that the results arrived at in these conferences should be reported to the greater assemblies held in Cambridge at the time of the Sturbridge Fair of 1587, and in London at the time

of the Bartholomew Fair; such times were chosen as being occasions when considerable gatherings of people would be less noticeable. Reports were also to be sent up to a synod held at St John's College, Cambridge, at the Sturbridge Fair time of 1589. On this occasion Travers's Discipline, after further revision and correction was subscribed to by the members present as essential and necessary for all time.

At the Northamptonshire Assembly an Ecclesiastical Survey of the churches of the county was ordered to be made and a return sent in of the value of each benefice and of the population of the parish, giving also the name of the incumbent and a description of his personal character and ministry. It was also resolved to obtain, if possible, a more extended, a national, survey of churches for parliamentary purposes, and to arrange for representatives to be sent up to London when Parliament was in session. It will thus be seen that there was a very business-like air about this design for 'setting up a discipline within a discipline, Presbytery in Episcopacy.'

There was another department of their propaganda destined to play an important part in the movement. The men driven from their ministry and silenced from public speech began to defend themselves by means of the press. The age of that pamphleteering, which in the next century was to

assume such portentous dimensions, had begun to dawn. Tracts and treatises appeared in quick succession in which the state of things existing in the Church was laid bare with no gentle hand, and strange tales became current talk. The archbishop decided all this must come to an end. On June 23, 1586, therefore, he obtained from the Star Chamber a decree for limiting the number of printing presses and for keeping under strict surveillance such as were licensed. It was ordered that no press should be set up outside the city and suburbs of London, except one in the University of Cambridge and one in the University of Oxford, one and no more. Even in London no printer might start business except with the consent of the wardens of the Company of Stationers, and presses everywhere were to be open and accessible at all times to the said wardens. Finally no book was to be printed till first read by the archbishop, the bishop of London, or by censors of their appointment.

Under the powers conferred by this decree, the printing-office of Robert Waldegrave in St Paul's Churchyard was broken open on April 16, 1588, by John Wolfe, the beadle of the Stationers' Company. The press was seized, the letters defaced and various printed sheets carried away. Among the latter were some copies of a work entitled *The State of the Church of England laid open in a Conference.*

No name of the author appeared upon the title-page, but it is now known to have been the work of John Udall, the vicar of Kingston-on-Thames, a convinced puritan, and a man of some reputation as an author and an eloquent preacher. This book of his, better known under the title of *Diotrephes*, though not belonging to the series, may yet be described as the precursor of the Martin Marprelate Tracts, so famous in the discussions of the time. This description of the state of the Church was brought out in the form of a dialogue which is supposed to have taken place at an Inn on the North Road where wayfarers from Scotland and the North met travellers from London and the South. In this conversation there are not a few Bunyanesque touches of humour, with suggestive asides, reminding us again and again of Mr Byends and his way of looking at life. Diotrephes is a bishop travelling incognito from Scotland where, to his distress, the puritans have set up their discipline and utterly overthrown the sovereignty of the bishops. He would know from the inn-keeper what news there is of church affairs hereabouts. This is not a subject on which mine host is very strong, for he seldom goes to church, but he will fetch in a money-lender from London who happens to be in the house. On this worthy being appealed to, he relates that the bishops —'God's blessing be on them for it—say pretty well by one and by one to these precise and whot

preachers; for some of them are put to silence and others are close prisoners in the Gatehouse; some are well-loaden with irons in the White Lion, and some are in the Clinke.' This is good news to the inn-keeper who likes not these precisian preachers. For one of that sort has come to this town, 'a town that stands on victualling, being thorow-fare, and he preacheth against good-fellowship which he calls drunkenness,' so that he has spoilt half their gains. At this point one Paule, a preacher from London joins in the talk, giving a searching account of church matters from the puritan point of view, and, as we may suppose, there is animated discussion till bed-time. Next morning, before the travellers set forth on their divers ways, the talk is renewed, the concluding part, which is the longest, being a conference between Tertullus a Catholic and Diotrephes as to how they can best combine to checkmate the puritans and safeguard the bishops. They agree that it would be well to secure the lords of the council, and make sure of the universities, for they have great privileges and puritans start up every day.

Even from this brief glimpse it will be seen that *Diotrephes* was fitting forerunner to 'Martin Marprelate, Gentleman,' and indeed was the work of the same printer who, six months later, sent forth *The Epistle*, the first of the Marprelate series. For Waldegrave, after having had press and types seized

in London made his way to Kingston, Udall's town, and thence, to avoid observation, to East Molesey near by, and set up another press at which soon after midsummer 1588, he printed another book for Udall entitled *A Demonstration of Discipline*; this being followed in November by *The Epistle*. The appearance of the latter, being as we have said, the first of the Marprelate series produced a great sensation and became the talk of the town. 'Every man,' says Martin, 'talks of my Worship; he says that he has been entertained at Court.' This fame, naturally, was not without its peril; the authorities were soon eagerly in pursuit, and as East Molesey was no longer considered safe the press and types were secretly carted away to Fawsley, the seat of Sir Richard Knightley, near Northampton, and there *The Epitome*, the second Martin, which had been promised in *The Epistle*, was printed.

Early in 1589 Thomas Cooper, the bishop of Winchester, in reply to these attacks published an *Admonition to the People of England*, denying the charges made against the bishops and urging as a warning that this attack upon the Church would certainly be followed by an attack upon the State. Meantime to evade pursuit, the secret press was removed from Fawsley to Coventry where the broadside known as *The Minerals*, one of the minor Marprelate tracts, was printed in February. Towards

the end of March another of the tracts was printed at Coventry having for its title, what was then a common street-cry, *Hay any Worke for the Cooper*, which of course was a rejoinder to Bishop Cooper's *Admonition*. After this issue Waldegrave was succeeded as printer by John Hodgkins. The press was again removed from place to place and at length, through the vigilance of the Earl of Derby, was seized at Newton, a mile or so out of Manchester, then one of the strongholds of puritanism. Both press and printers were at once sent back to London under escort, the printers being received as close prisoners to Bridewell.

It does not fall within the purpose of this narrative to follow any further the history of these once-famous tracts. It may suffice to say that altogether there were seven of them, and that while their authorship, like that of the *Letters of Junius*, is one of the unsolved problems of literature, there is a growing consensus of opinion that they were mainly, if not entirely, from the pen of Job Throckmorton, the puritan squire of Haseley Manor, near Warwick; and that along with Waldegrave and Hodgkins, John Penry was concerned with him in the arrangements for printing.

The purpose of the writer was to carry the war into the camp of the men who, as he believed, were not only oppressing the puritan clergy, but were

themselves open to serious charges of neglect and worldliness. This he did, exposing them to ridicule by means of banter and satire. Yet it must be said that in the midst of all his banter, and under all his personalities Martin had a serious and earnest purpose, which can scarcely be said of the anti-Martinists, who, in their replies to his attacks, descended only too often to grossness and indecencies. But what we are now mainly concerned with is the fact that the Marprelate Tracts, with their compromising charges and irritating personalities, gave added force to the resentment roused by the persistent and organised attempts of the puritan party to overthrow Episcopacy and to substitute for it the system of Scotland and Geneva in the government of the English Church.

We may now turn for a moment to see how these attempts, at length, reached a crisis and ended in conspicuous failure. It goes without saying that the authorities of the Church were not altogether ignorant of what was going on. For letters had been intercepted and plans laid bare; and at length on July 16, 1590, Archbishop Whitgift drew up a series of Articles against the leaders of the movement under which, later in the year, they were summoned before the Court of High Commission, and afterwards called to appear before the Star Chamber. Cartwright was summoned from his hospital at Warwick to

London and lodged in the Fleet prison. He and his companions were examined again and again and refusing to take the oath *ex officio* were consigned to prison. There they lingered on all through the cold and wretchedness of that and the following winter without any farther process. After two years and more of this kind of experience they petitioned the Queen for a merciful release, repudiating the charges of sedition, schism and rebellion, which had been brought against them, and assuring her of their loyalty. But she was deaf to their pleading. Eventually Cartwright was released upon promise of quiet and peaceable behaviour, but only upon bond to appear before the High Commission when called upon. Several of the prisoners yielded at length, took the oath and gave evidence as to what had taken place in their assemblies. Others still refused and remained under suspension, some for five and others for seven years. John Udall, whose *Diotrephes* and *Demonstration of Discipline* could neither be forgotten nor forgiven, was singled out for special indignity. As his vicarage was in the county of Surrey he was taken, heavily ironed, and indicted at the Croydon Assizes of July, 1590, for sedition, inasmuch as he 'not having the fear of God before his eyes did maliciously publish a slanderous and infamous libel against the Queen's Majesty, her Crown and Dignity.' So ran the indictment in which

was also quoted an objectionable passage from the *Demonstration*, and reference made to the burning of his other book the *Diotrephes* dialogue. After the forms of law had been gone through the prisoner at the bar was convicted of felony, and condemned to be executed: any criticism of arrangements the Queen had set up in the Church being ruled to be sedition against her person. No immediate attempt, however, was made to carry out this, which has been described as an atrocious sentence, and Udall lingered on indefinitely in prison. We gather from records of the time that great resentment was felt at these proceedings, and that persons of influence, such as Sir Walter Raleigh, the Earl of Essex, and Nowell, the dean of St Paul's, interested themselves in the case of this man and interceded on his behalf, but without result. Further still, in March, 1592, the Governor of the Turkey Company offered to send him to Syria, as pastor to their agents in that country, if he could be released at once. But he was not, and the vessel was under the necessity of sailing without him. Three months later a pardon was sealed in June, but even after this there were other requisite formalities, and before these could be gone through, the hardships of prison life had done their work, and John Udall died while still a prisoner in Southwark gaol.

# V

## ABSOLUTISM AND LIBERTY

THE sternly repressive measures carried out by Archbishop Whitgift against those who sought to graft the presbyterian discipline upon the episcopal system were successful in crushing out all further attempts at organisation on presbyterian lines; but not the earnest desire after further reformation in a puritan direction. Disaffection was not put an end to by being driven out of sight. Those who were locked up in the prisons of London represented only a fraction of those who were longing for change and more earnest spiritual life. The movement had spread widely in the English shires, and out of the two thousand ministers in the Church who were really preachers no fewer than five hundred subscribed the Book of Discipline in 1590, and prayed Parliament that this book 'might be from henceforth authorised, put in use and practised throughout all Her Majesty's dominions.' This was an ominous fact, and when Hooker in 1594 published the first four books of his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, he evidently felt that even then

the threatening danger had not ceased to impend. In a long preface he explains why he entered upon this, the great work of his life—'though for no other cause yet for this: that posterity may know we have not loosely through silence permitted things to pass away as in a dream.'

Having traced the course of the puritan movement *within* the National Church from 1564 to 1590, we turn now to that other outworking of yet more strenuous puritan feeling which took shape *outside* the State Church system, taking the form of Separatism and the establishment of self-governing churches. This movement took its rise mainly in two different centres—London and the Eastern Counties, the former being specially associated with the names of Henry Barrow and John Greenwood, the latter with that of Robert Browne. The last-named reformer, from whom came the name 'Brownist,' was born about 1550, the third son of Anthony Browne of Tolethorpe Manor, sheriff of Rutlandshire in 1546, 1558 and 1571. He graduated at Cambridge in 1572, and even as an undergraduate was spoken of as 'being known and counted forward in religion.' Moreover he was at the University at the time of the puritan excitement caused by the vestment controversy and Cartwright's lectures. And after leaving Cambridge, 'he fell into great care and was sore grieved while he long considered many things amiss, and the cause

of all to be the woeful and lamentable state of the Church.' In 1580, he had reached the theoretical position of Congregationalism, which is that you cannot accept the entire baptized population of a given parish as the Church of Christ in that place, for, as he expressed it, 'the Kingdom of God is not to be begun by whole parishes but rather of the worthiest were they never so few.' The spiritual few he would take as a nucleus and work from them as the centre. On this principle as the theoretical justification of separation, and not merely on dislike of ceremonies and prelatical power, he and his friend Richard Harrison, also a Cambridge man, organised a free church in Norwich in 1581. They also visited other places in East Anglia, notably Bury St Edmunds, where there were 'assemblies of the common people to the number of a hundred at a time, who met in private houses and conventicles.' As a result Browne found himself in prison and on his release went to Middelburg in Zealand, where in 1582 he printed and published the three books in which he gave formal expression to the principles he had embraced. These were: *A Treatise of Reformation without tarying for anie; The life and manner of all true Christians;* and *A Treatise upon the* 23. *of Matthewe.* His friend Richard Harrison also published at the same time a small book on the 122nd Psalm bearing in the same direction. These books were conveyed over

into England secretly, and in June, 1583, a royal proclamation was issued against them, commanding the destruction of all copies of 'the same or such like seditious books.' About the time this proclamation appeared, the Assizes were held at Bury St Edmunds, when John Copping and Elias Thacker were convicted of sedition for spreading these books, and were hanged before the Assizes were over. About the same time also, and upon the same charge, William Denys was hanged at Thetford, criticism of the Queen's Church being ruled to be sedition against the Queen's person.

Earlier even than this Eastern movement in the direction of Separatism, was another which was organised in London some time before 1571. Three documents which happen to have been preserved together among the State Papers bring to our notice what would seem to have been the earliest organised Congregational church after the Reformation. The most important of the three is a petition to the Queen signed by twenty-seven persons, one of them giving Whitechapel Street as an address, urging the necessity of ecclesiastical reform. They describe themselves as 'We a poor congregation whom God hath separated from the Church of England and from the mingled and false worshipping therein' and say that 'as God giveth strength at this day we do serve the Lord every Sabbath day in houses, and on the fourth

day come together weekly to use prayer and exercise discipline on them that do deserve it, by the strength and true warrant of the Lord God's Word.' They further state incidentally that the maintainers of the Canon Law have 'by long imprisonment pined and killed the Lord's servants, as our minister Richard Fitz, Thomas Bowland, deacon, one Partryche and Gyles Fouler, and besides them a great multitude.' Along with this written and subscribed petition there is a small printed sheet in black letter entitled *The trewe Markes of Christ's Church &c.* These are three (1) the glorious Word and evangel are preached freely and purely; (2) the sacraments are administered according to the institution and good word of the Lord Jesus; and (3) discipline is administered agreeably to the same heavenly and almighty word. The third document, also in black letter, sets forth reasons for separation from the Anglican Church and prays that 'God may give them strength still to strive in suffering under the Cross, that the blessed Word of our God alone may rule and have the highest place.' What became of this little community we do not know. It was probably broken up and scattered, the members of it being sent to prison, and these somewhat pathetic and time-worn documents preserved in the Record Office are all that remains to tell the tale. But moving westward from Whitechapel in 1571, we come in later years upon congregations of Separatists

meeting in various places in the city, and in the woods of Islington where the protestants were accustomed to meet for secret worship in Queen Mary's time. On Sunday, October 8, 1586, twenty-one of these people were met at Henry Martin's house in the parish of St Andrew's-in-the-Wardrobe, and, as they were listening to the reading of the Scriptures by John Greenwood, they were broken in upon by the bishop of London's pursuivants and brought as prisoners the same day to his palace at Fulham for examination. In the event ten were released and eleven kept close prisoners; of the eleven thus detained Alice Roe and Margaret Maynard died of the 'infection' of Newgate, and John Chandler, and Nicholas Crane, an aged man of sixty-six years, also died in prison.

John Greenwood, who was reading the Scriptures to these people at the time they were broken in upon, was, like Robert Browne, an undergraduate at Cambridge at the time of the Cartwright controversy. His mind was so powerfully influenced by this that even after he had left the University and had received ordination he first resigned his cure, then a private chaplaincy held in the house of Lord Rich of Rochford, and finally left the Episcopal Church altogether. About the same time he formed an intimate friendship with Henry Barrow, the son of a country squire of Shipdam in Norfolk, he being

a kinsman also of Lord Bacon. At the close of his Cambridge career, Barrow was trained for the bar at Gray's Inn, living in London for a while. Turning casually into a church one day he heard a sermon which resulted in a changed life for him. It became whispered among his acquaintances that Barrow had turned puritan, or as Bacon described it: 'He made a leap from a vain and libertine youth to a preciseness in the highest degree.' Changed life brought changed companionships and he and John Greenwood became from this time friends of the most intimate kind. When therefore Greenwood had been arrested in London and sent prisoner to the Clink, Barrow went to visit him on Sunday morning, November 19, 1586. Little knowing that he was already suspect because of his ecclesiastical opinions, he found that he had walked into a trap, for they had been on the look-out for him. He was arrested at once and sent in a boat up the river to Lambeth, where he was examined by Whitgift and committed to the Gatehouse. Five months later he was again examined before the Court of High Commission; and at the Newgate Sessions of May, 1587, he and his friend Greenwood were indicted under the Act of 1581, for 'withdrawing from the religion now by her Highness's authority established,' and committed to the Fleet prison.

During the long and weary years of imprisonment which followed between his committal to the Fleet in

May, 1587, and his execution at Tyburn in March, 1593, Barrow produced the books with which his name is associated, the sheets of which were conveyed out of prison secretly as he wrote them, and printed abroad at Dort by one Hanse. The central principle he insists upon in these books is that which Browne had enunciated before him, namely, that you cannot have a truly Christian Church unless it is composed of spiritual men: 'a true planted and rightly established Church of Christ is a company of faithful people, separated from unbelievers, gathered in the name of Christ whom they truly worship and readily obey. They are a brotherhood, a communion of saints, each one of them standing in and for their Christian liberty to practise whatsoever God hath commanded and revealed unto them in His holy Word.' That Word and not Tradition is to be their guide; that is the golden reed for measuring our temple, our altar and our worship. He is opposed to all hierarchies in the Church, to all lords and rulers except Christ Himself. According to him the greatest Elder of the Church, the pastor, is but a servant and steward of the house, not lord of the heritage; his honour consisteth in his service, and his service belongeth unto all. A Church constituted of spiritually renewed men and recognising the headship and authority of Christ is capable of self-government, has right and power to discipline itself, having, as every

particular congregation the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to censure sin and excommunicate obstinate offenders.

Such were Barrow's views on Church government, which were essentially and fundamentally opposed to the Established Church system which lodged that government in the hands of Queen and Privy Council, archbishops, bishops and archdeacons, and in a Star Chamber and Court of High Commission. The books in which he had promulgated these views, and which he had composed stealthily during his long imprisonment, were now regarded as a further, an additional offence against the Queen's supremacy in things ecclesiastical as well as civil. For this further offence he was brought to trial on the 11th of March, 1593, and on the 23rd both he and John Greenwood were convicted of publishing seditious books and sentenced to death for the offence.

Writing to a lady of rank, a kinswoman of his own, between condemnation and execution, Barrow says: 'For books written more than three years since (after well near six years' imprisonment) the prelates have caused us to be indicted, arraigned, condemned.' On March 24, the morning after sentence had been passed preparations were made for execution; Barrow and Greenwood were brought out of prison, their irons smitten off and they were on the point of being bound to the cart when a reprieve came. A few days later,

however, they were early and secretly conveyed along Holborn to the place of execution at Tyburn; they were actually tied by the neck to the fatal tree and were speaking a few parting words to the people when again a reprieve came; 'the people with exceeding rejoicing and applause' cheering them on their way back to prison. Finally, on the 6th of April, they were again conveyed to the place of execution and this time they returned no more. The following month, on the 29th of May, John Penry, who had recently gone over from presbyterianism to separatism, was led out to St Thomas-a-Watering, Kennington, and there hanged also, at a time when few were near. Thus the three Martyrs of 1583 in the Eastern Counties were followed by the three of 1593 in London and the roll was complete. Meantime, while these trials and executions were going forward, the Parliament of 35 Elizabeth was in session from February 19 to April 10, when a measure was passed, the stern Conventicle Act of 1593, which was intended to crush Nonconformity once for all, so far as Separatism was concerned. This Act, which was the culmination of the measures taken by Elizabeth to repress Puritanism, provided that if any person above the age of sixteen years should refrain, or persuade any other person to refrain, from coming to Church for one month without lawful cause, or be present at any assemblies, conventicles or meetings under colour

or pretence of any exercise of religion, such person shall be committed to prison there to remain without bail or mainprise until they shall conform and yield themselves to come to some Church according to her Majesty's laws and statutes aforesaid. It was further provided that if such persons did not conform and make public confession and submission in the parish church they shall abjure this realm of England and all others the Queen's Majesty's dominions for ever; and if they returned without special license, in every such case, the person so offending should be adjudged a felon, and should suffer as in case of felony, without benefit of clergy. Under the provisions of this Act it will be seen that those of the puritans who were Separatists had no choice but either to conform or go into exile. Penry before his execution had advised his London brethren to choose the latter: 'Seeing banishment, with loss of goods is likely to betide you all, prepare yourselves for this hard entreaty.' He advises them to go and to keep together, not leaving the poor and friendless to stay behind and be forced to break a good conscience for want of support and kindness; and especially in pathetic entreaty he beseeches them to take his poor and desolate widow and his fatherless and friendless orphans with them into exile whithersoever they went. This they did when many of them in the summer and autumn of that year went over into Holland. For in the

Netherlands Republic there was, what there was not in England, liberty of conscience and freedom of worship. On the 5th of July, 1581, the knights, nobles and cities of Holland and Zealand had called upon William the Silent to accept entire authority as sovereign and chief of the land, directing him 'to maintain the exercise only of the Reformed Evangelical religion, without, however, permitting that enquiries should be made into any man's belief or conscience, or that any injury or hindrance should be offered to any man on account of his religion.' Thus Amsterdam became the asylum of liberty, and drew to itself from many lands those who valued freedom, civil or religious. Among these were the members of the Separatist Church in London, also those who went over from Gainsborough and Scrooby, the last-named community, after remaining some months at Amsterdam, ultimately settling at Leyden where they remained till 1620, when they sailed in the *Mayflower* for New England. These Churches seeking refuge in Holland between 1595 and 1620, were recruited by other exiles for conscience sake from various parts of England. As we gather from the Puiboeken, or public records of their adopted country, these came from no fewer than twenty-nine English counties, besides the Welsh county of Caermarthen. Northumberland and Yorkshire were represented, so were Sussex and Kent; Cornwall and

Devon sent of their people as did also Norfolk and Suffolk; the North and South Midlands as well as Lancashire and Lincoln.

During the last three or four years of Elizabeth's life there was a kind of truce between the Church and the puritans. It was known that King James would, in the event of the death of the Queen, who was now advanced in years, succeed to the English throne, and as he had been brought up among the presbyterians of Scotland, changes might be imminent. The puritans were hopeful of his favour, and when he did succeed and was on his way to London, they met him at Hinchinbrook and presented what was called the Millenary Petition, as being supposed to be signed by a thousand of the English puritan clergy, pleading for further reforms in the puritan direction. Nothing came of this, however, and the result of the Hampton Court Conference was equally disappointing. The King let them state their case and then bluntly told them that if that was all they had to say they must either conform or go. Subscription to the whole Prayer Book and Articles, which was the special achievement of Elizabeth's reign, was still to be enforced; and to this were to be added the Canons made by Convocation of 1604, which were to be the contribution to Church order to signalise the reign of James. Some of these canons were old and some were new. They asserted again the Church

of England to be the true and Catholic Church of this realm, and any one denying this would be *ipso facto* excommunicate; so would all objectors to the Prayer Book, and those who said that the government of the Church by archbishops and bishops was repugnant to the Word of God. And in those days excommunication meant more than spiritual deprivation. It meant that he who was subjected to that penalty must not merely be turned out of the congregation of the faithful, but as a citizen would be rendered incapable of suing for his lawful debts, and be liable to be imprisoned for life by process of the civil courts, or until reconciled to the Church; and when he died would be degradingly denied Christian burial. Bancroft, who on the death of Whitgift had succeeded to the See of Canterbury, shewed no lack of zeal in enforcing these canons. He renewed the use of copes, surplices, caps and hoods, according to the *first* Service Book of Edward VI, and he obliged the clergy to subscribe over again the three Articles of Whitgift, which by Canon XXXVI they were to declare they did 'willingly and from the heart.' As the result of this further action more than 300 ministers were silenced or deprived, some by excommunication, and others by being forced to leave the country and go into banishment.

But note must now be taken of the fact that

James summoned a new Parliament in January, and Parliament under James proved to be more independent than it had dared to be under Elizabeth. Before granting supplies they first demanded redress of grievances, and further claimed the privileges of the Commons of England not as a matter of grace, but as their lawful inheritance. It soon became clear that a new era had dawned. Elizabeth even had scarcely been able to restrain Parliament from debating the subject of the state of the Church of England, James could not restrain them at all. For a majority of the Commons were puritans, not in the sense of those of a later time who were opposed on principle to government by bishops and to the use of the Book of Common Prayer, but in the sense that they wished that men who had scruples of conscience should be allowed some latitude, and they were of opinion that it was of more importance to secure effective preachers and a resident clergy, than to contend for a rigid observance of form and ceremony. Bills for providing a learned and godly ministry and for abating pluralities were brought in and passed by the Commons, but were thrown out in the Lords. On May 30, the King came down to Parliament and rebuked the Commons for intrusion upon his prerogative, as Elizabeth would have done, but he was not met as she was. They were not willing to acknowledge that they had exceeded their powers.

On the contrary, in respectful terms they asserted that their privileges were their due inheritance no less than their lands and goods, and further declared that these privileges had been more dangerously impugned than at any former time, their freedom of speech impaired by many reproofs, and their House made contemptible in the eyes of the world. As to the Church they expressly denied the power of the Crown to 'alter religion' or to make any law concerning it otherwise than by consent of Parliament. This theory of government ran directly counter to that held by the King, who claimed that kingly power admitted of no restraint by law. Here were two opposing theories admitting of no reconciliation; and Parliament placed theirs on record in strenuous and unmistakable language: 'The prerogatives of princes,' said they, 'may easily and do daily grow: the privileges of subjects are, for the most part, at an everlasting stand, and being once lost are not recovered but with much disquiet.' It has been well said that this which had been the history of France, of Castile, of Aragon, and of other continental kingdoms might have been the history of England. Absolute monarchies had elsewhere risen on the ruins of national liberties, and this might have been the fate of England too but for the patriotic spirit of her statesmen. Said a parliamentary orator in 1625: 'We are the last monarchy in Christendom that maintains its rights.'

In this great and far-reaching controversy the nation at large had to choose sides as to whether Church and State should be controlled by the representatives of the people or by the will of the King. The choice was made. Convocation adopted the principle that resistance to the Sovereign is in all cases condemned by the law of God. Church and King joined hands on the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance; the puritans and Parliament in maintaining the principles of constitutional government. In this fateful severance there was involved the history of the coming time, the origin of contending parties in the State, the outbreak of Civil War and the consequent downfall of the hierarchical constitution of the Church.

Charles I succeeded to the throne of England on the death of his father in 1625, and in one dangerous direction proceeded to tread in his steps. James, when refused supplies by Parliament until after redress of grievances, resorted again and again to unconstitutional methods of obtaining the money he needed for his wars. He imposed taxes on imports by his own authority; these impositions being chiefly laid on articles of luxury or on foreign manufactures which competed with native industry. Later on he asked for loans, and then sought for benevolences. Letters were written to every county and borough asking for voluntary gifts for the needs of the King,

but at the end of two months only £500 was subscribed in reply, and after two years of continuous pressure only £66,000 had been raised altogether. King Charles, his son and successor, when he came to the throne travelled along the same unconstitutional road, with this difference only that he travelled faster and farther. Without authority of Parliament he exacted tonnage and poundage, demanded a loan of £100,000 from the city of London, which, on being refused, he changed for a forced loan equal in amount to five subsidies, about £350,000. Refusal in this case was visited with punishment, gentlemen being sent to prison and ordinary men enlisted as soldiers. Other means of raising money were resorted to also, one being the levying of shipmoney upon all the counties, a tax hitherto only laid upon the maritime counties and that in time of war merely. Strong was the resentment and loud the discontent of the nation at these proceedings.

But while some were protesting, the Court section of the clergy took sides with the King and began to exalt the royal prerogative. Dr Sibthorpe of Burton Latimer, in his assize sermon at Northampton, maintained that the King possessed legislative power and that all resistance to the royal will was actually sinful. Dr Mainwaring also, in a sermon preached before the King himself, denied that the consent of Parliament was necessary to taxation. For this offence the Lords

imprisoned and deprived him, but the King at once pardoned him and gave him the rectory of Stanford Rivers. This was in 1628, and on January 20, 1629, Parliament assembled, the third of the reign, meeting the King in no friendly mood.

When business began other matters besides taxation came up for debate. In a Declaration the previous November, the King had ratified and confirmed the Articles as containing the true doctrine of the Church of England, and by way of putting an end to the curious and unhappy differences so long prevailing in the Church, enjoined all preachers to keep to them and put all curious search aside. Sir John Eliot pointed out that this enjoining of silence was one-sided, for while limiting the puritan it gave full freedom to the Anglo-Catholic. On January 26, a Committee on Religion was formed to consider the subject of religious grievances, which formulated a series of resolutions to be brought before the House. They pointed to the threatening dangers from the growth of Popery, and to the fact that Anglo-Catholicism, which they called the Arminian faction, was separating them from the Reformed Churches abroad and bringing divisions at home. They drew attention to the introduction of new ceremonies in worship, to the erection of altars in place of communion tables; to the bringing men to question and trouble for not standing up at

the *Gloria Patri*; to the publishing of books and the preaching of sermons contrary to the orthodox doctrine, while books and sermons from the other side were rigidly suppressed. They further pleaded that bishoprics and other preferments should not be conferred upon those who practised superstitious ceremonies, but upon learned, pious and orthodox men; that non-residence of clergy be put a stop to, and means be provided for maintaining a godly, able minister in every parish. The King took alarm at these resolutions and ordered an adjournment of the House, and again, on the 2nd of March, the Speaker declared the King's pleasure that it should be adjourned until the 10th. He was met with cries of 'No!' and Eliot rose to speak. The Speaker said he had an absolute command from the King to leave the chair if any one spoke; he was, however, held down in the chair by main force; Eliot asserted the right of the House to adjourn itself; the doors were locked and three resolutions were put to the vote and carried by acclamation. These were: (1) That whosoever shall bring in innovations in religion, or opinions disagreeing from the true and orthodox Church should be reputed a capital enemy to this kingdom and the commonwealth; (2) Whosoever should counsel or advise the levying of taxes and subsidies not being granted by Parliament should be reputed an innovator in the government and a

capital enemy to the State; and (3) That any merchant or person voluntarily paying such taxes and subsidies not being granted by Parliament should be reputed a betrayer of the liberties of England and an enemy to the same. Nine members of the House of Commons were imprisoned for their part in these proceedings; Parliament was dissolved and then for eleven years England was governed without any Parliament at all. The significant fact about that eventful day in Parliament was that in the three resolutions passed, there was a union of religious discontent and political discontent. Elizabeth's policy had created a religious opposition, and the policy of James and Charles had created a political opposition; and by the three resolutions of March 2, 1629, these two causes had become one, and out of this union came the Long Parliament of 1640, and the Civil War, with the consequent downfall of Church and King.

During the long years when England was under the personal government of Charles I, the Church continued to pursue the course dictated to it by Archbishop Laud. As a man after the King's own heart he had received preferment after preferment, rising rapidly to power till he had attained to the highest position in the Church, and had become the King's most trusted ecclesiastical adviser. A martinet in all matters of form and ceremony, and unweariedly

at work, his influence was felt at every point. Nothing was too great for him to aim at, nothing too minute for him to care for. He had untiring perseverance, the instinct of order and a passion for detail. He was just as earnest and persistent in getting rails erected round the communion table of the parish church and compelling the people to kneel there, as he was in trying to revolutionize the religion of the whole realm of Scotland by bringing it over from Presbyterianism to Episcopacy.

Laud's policy was the one prominent and pre-eminent fact in the history of the Church of England during the years between 1629 and 1640. Among the clergy he prohibited the least manifestation of nonconformity or individuality. They were no longer to be permitted to omit this or that prayer at pleasure, to stand when they were bidden to kneel, or to kneel when they were bidden to stand. So far as the laity were concerned they were to be treated as children and made to subject their own individuality to that of their spiritual pastors and masters; were forbidden to leave their own parish church, to attend even episcopal services elsewhere. In parish after parish puritan ministers were compelled, contrary to the established custom, to set the communion table altar-wise, to place altar-rails, and require the people to come from their seats and receive the sacrament kneeling.

As the records of the time shew, this last requirement raised a burning question as between Puritan and Anglo-Catholic. Was the communion table a table or an altar? Should it be placed in the body of the church or chancel or set altar-wise at the east end? In Elizabeth's time a compromise had been come to which was substantially adopted in the Canons of 1604 to the effect that the table should stand in the church where the altar stood before the Reformation, except at the celebration of the Communion, when it was to be brought out and placed where the communicants could most conveniently see and hear the minister. And in nearly all the parish churches it kept its place in the middle of the church or chancel, and any attempt to remove it was resented by the parishioners as a step towards popery. In St Gregory's Church, St Paul's, the dean and chapter had placed the table in the east end setting rails before it, whereupon five parishioners appealed to the Court of Arches against this proceeding. The King himself then appeared on the scene, summoned the five before the Privy Council and sharply told them that the placing of the communion table was no business of theirs. This was in 1633, and in 1635, Archbishop Laud gave orders that the table should in all churches be moved to the east end and be railed in. This order was met by stout resistance. The churchwardens of Beckington were excom-

municated for refusing to obey, and thrown into prison. The opposition was especially strong in the dioceses of Lincoln and Norwich. In spite of resistance, however, in parish after parish Laud carried his way, but with disastrous results to the best interests of the Church.

In 1634 the archbishop revived the long disused claim to Metropolitical Visitation, sending his vicar-general to report upon the ecclesiastical condition of the province of Canterbury. This was Sir Nathaniel Brent, who began with the diocese of Lincoln and worked his way southwards. He unearthed strange doings and met with curious experiences. He also carried out some much-needed reforms; for he had to report that ale-houses, hounds and swine were kept in churchyards; that copes and vestments had been embezzled; that clandestine marriages were celebrated by the clergy, and that both clergy and laity were much given to drunkenness. His chief attentions, however, were bestowed upon the puritan portion of the clergy. He reports 'at Huntingdon divers ministers in that division were suspected of puritanisme'; and of Bedford, which he reached on the 26th of August, he says, 'Mr Peter Bulkeley, rector of Odell, suspected for puritanisme was suspended for non-appearance. He came to me at Aylesburie, where he confessed he never used the surplisse or the cross in baptisme. He is to appear

in the High Commission Court the first court day in November, if he reform not before.' Peter Bulkeley, who was of resolute puritan stock—his sister also being the mother of Oliver St John, who was afterwards Cromwell's Lord Chief Justice—resolved to leave the country rather than conform. The Pilgrim Fathers, who had sailed from Leyden and founded the old Plymouth Colony in New England in 1620, were followed ten years later by other Englishmen of puritan faith, who founded the towns round Massachusetts Bay and along the Connecticut River, exercising a powerful influence upon the future of American religious life. There were among them laymen possessed of wealth and social position, and many ministers who had occupied influential positions in the Church. Between 1629 and 1640 about ninety university men, three-fourths of them from Cambridge, had emigrated. Of these Cambridge men, while nine were of Trinity and nine from St John's, no fewer than twenty-two were of Emmanuel College, the puritan foundation of Sir Walter Mildmay. In this list of twenty-two are found the great names of John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, R. Saltonstall, Thomas Shepard and John Harvard. It has been estimated upon what seem fairly reliable data that as the result of Laud's administration some 4000 puritan families, or an aggregate of over 20,000 persons went over to New England. With the exception of

the Pilgrim Fathers, who sailed in the *Mayflower* in 1620, these were not Separatists. Francis Higginson, vicar of one of the five parishes of Leicester, who sailed with the first party in 1629, may be taken as representative of all the rest. As the ship was off the Land's End, he and his companions stood on deck to take the last farewell look of the land they were leaving and which they loved so well. Standing there and looking eastward till the coastline faded out of sight, he said: 'We will not say as the Separatists were wont to say at their leaving of England, "Farewell, Babylon, farewell, Rome," but we will say, "Farewell, dear England, farewell, the Church of God in England, and all the Christian friends there." We do not go to New England as Separatists from the Church of England, though we cannot but separate from the corruptions in it.'

# VI

## PURITANISM IN ITS TRIUMPH AND DOWNFALL

THROUGH the series of years during which Charles I was governing England without Parliament, and Laud was harassing both clergy and laity by his high-handed ways, the forces of opposition were steadily gaining strength against them both. On the constitutional question the significant words of Sir John Eliot, spoken when the struggle began, had not been forgotten, when he said—'Upon this dispute not alone our goods and lands are engaged, but all that we call ours. Those rights, those privileges which made our fathers free men are in question.' On the religious question also there was deepening determination to resist ecclesiastical oppression, and puritanism was steadily growing in numbers and influence. These two forces were now making common cause with each other against the day of reckoning. That day came when on the 3rd of November, 1640, that Long Parliament assembled which was to change so much before it reached its end. The King was urgent for a money grant to relieve him of the

consequences of his Scottish war, but the Commons being in no conciliatory mood demanded redress of grievances before voting supply. And as in their view the religious grievance took precedence of the constitutional, they concentrated their attack upon the Canons recently passed in Convocation. A Committee of twenty-four was appointed to prepare a Declaration on the State of the Kingdom, the Book of Canons being referred to the Grand Committee for Religion.

Meantime an ominous petition against Episcopacy was presented to the House by citizens of London which was signed by 15,000 persons, its delivery in Westminster Hall being attended by no fewer than 1500 gentlemen of the city. This document, known as the Root-and-Branch petition is to be distinguished from the Root-and-Branch *Bill* of the following May. It covered a wide range of ecclesiastical grievances. Among the evils complained of was the silencing of so many faithful, diligent and powerful ministers because they could not in conscience submit to the needless devices of the bishops; and also the great increase of idle, lewd, dissolute and ignorant ministers. The petitioners also protested against the great and growing conformity of the Church of England to the Church of Rome in vestures, postures, ceremonies and administrations. Entering into detail they objected to the bowing towards the altar, and the

setting of images, crucifixes and conceits over it or tapers upon it; they misliked and protested against the christening and consecrating of buildings, fonts, tables, pulpits, chalices and churchyards, thereby putting holiness upon things inanimate. Finally, besides other grievances, they complained of inquisitorial proceedings extending even to men's thoughts; the apprehending and detaining men by pursuivants; the frequent suspending and depriving of ministers; the fining and imprisonment of all sorts of people; and other outrages contrary to the laws of the realm and the subjects' liberties. This petition from London was followed by others from the counties of Kent, Essex and Suffolk, that from Kent having 2500 names attached.

A month later there followed the document known as the 'Ministers' Petition and Remonstrance,' setting forth their grievances from their own point of view. They denied that diocesan bishops are a divine institution and objected to their assuming sole power of ordination and jurisdiction; they objected also to the delegation of the bishops' power to unmeet persons; to the imposing of the oath of canonical obedience and the enforcing of subscription; to the demanding of exorbitant fees on institution to a living; and, finally, they objected to the judicial power of the bishops in Parliament, in the Star Chamber, in the Commissions of the Peace and at

the Council Table. These petitions were followed by others, from no fewer than eleven counties, for the abolition of Episcopacy, that from Suffolk having as many as 4400 names attached, and that from Norfolk 2000. These various petitions were all referred to the Committee of twenty-four, out of which to prepare heads for the consideration of the House.

The following May the Houses passed a Bill depriving the King of the power to dissolve Parliament without its own consent, and on the 27th of the same month, Sir E. Dering, the member for Kent, moved the first reading of the Root-and-Branch Bill entitled 'An Act for the utter abolishing and taking away of all archbishops, bishops, their chancellors, commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, prebendaries, chanters and canons and all other their under officers.' In doing this he spoke regretfully of the necessity he felt to be laid upon him. 'I never was for ruin,' he said, 'so long as I could hope any hope of reforming. My hopes that way are now almost withered. When this Bill is perfected I shall give a sad "Aye" to it.' The Bill was read a second time the same day by a majority of 139 to 108 and referred to a Committee of the whole House. Here, after dealing with the preamble, they proceeded to the consideration of the clause for abolishing the offices of archbishops, bishops and the rest of the superior clergy; and then, on June 15, with the

question of deans and chapters, recording their decision that these officers be taken out of the Church and their lands appropriated to the advancement of learning and piety. It was further decided that the Ecclesiastical Courts should cease from and after the 1st of August; and that to replace the government thus superseded, the whole jurisdiction should be in the hands of nine chief commissioners who should appoint five ministers in every county for purposes of ordination.

At this point the Bill rested in Committee, for grave matters were felt to be impending, the King having announced his intention to visit Scotland, from which serious questions would be likely to arise. Parliament, having resumed, proceeded to deal with Laud's innovations. Commissions were appointed to visit the various counties for the defacing, demolishing and quite taking away of all images, altars, or tables turned altar-wise, crucifixes, superstitious pictures, ornaments and relics of idolatry out of all churches and chapels. These orders passed, the House adjourned to October 20.

Parliament, on reassembling, addressed itself first of all to what is known as the Grand Remonstrance, which was practically a long indictment of the King's conduct ever since his accession, to which he only replied by speaking disdainfully of their proposed ecclesiastical reforms. This he followed up by the

attempted Arrest of the Five Members who had taken a leading part in formulating the Remonstrance. Though he was baffled in this, it practically brought on a crisis from which he felt there could be no escape but by an appeal to arms. On the 22nd of August, therefore, Charles I set up the royal standard on Nottingham Hill, and called upon all loyal subjects to come to his aid against a rebellious Parliament. Once more, therefore, the nation was plunged into Civil War, the allegiance of the people being challenged, not as in the Wars of the Roses, by rival Houses, but claimed by the rival authorities of King and Parliament. It was not a Social War, but one of those conflicts of ideas that recur at intervals in the course of history, and always with tragic issue. For in a conflict of ideas the noblest minds, because of their very nobility are resolutely averse to compromise, and cannot reconcile themselves to defeat. This war was for sovereign right on the part of the people as well as on that of the King. Colonel Hutchinson said that it was on the question of civil right he joined with the Parliament, and though he was satisfied the endeavours of their opponents tended to subvert the protestant religion, 'he did not think that so clear a ground for the war as the defence of English liberties.' Cromwell also speaking on the subject twelve years after the war broke out, said distinctly that 'Religion was not the thing at

first contested for, but God brought it to that issue at last, and at last it proved to be that which was most dear to us.' And certainly, as we follow the course of events, it becomes clear that it was not Presbyterianism that brought on the war, but the war that brought in Presbyterianism. This system became organised in England in the seventeenth century, not as a matter of national preference, but of military necessity. For by the end of 1643 the outlook for the parliamentary party, so far as the war was concerned, was most depressing. The west, with few exceptions, had declared for the King, so had the north with the exception of Hull and Lancashire, and while Parliament had gained strength in the eastern counties, it held the midlands only with difficulty.

In anxious condition the puritans turned to their brethren in Scotland, and in November, 1643, the Scottish Parliament agreed to send 21,000 men to their assistance, but only on the understanding that the Solemn League and Covenant should be accepted in England as it had been in Scotland, and so pledge the two nations to unite for the reformation of religion according to the Word of God and the example of the best Reformed Churches. There were many in England who were willing to modify or even set aside Episcopacy, but there were many also who favoured congregational independence, which would be as rigorously repressed under the Scottish system

as it had been under the bishops; and there were few who were willing to introduce into England the inquisitorial jurisdiction exercised by the Church courts in Scotland. The necessity, however, was urgent; military help must be had and it could only be had on the terms offered. When it had passed both Houses, the Commons and the Assembly of Divines swore to the Solemn League and Covenant on September 25; and somewhat later the few Peers who still lingered at Westminster swore to it also. The following February it was universally imposed upon all Englishmen over eighteen years of age, the names of those refusing to be formally certified.

The General Assembly in Edinburgh having laid it down that there could be no hope of unity in religion till there be one form of ecclesiastical government, a parliamentary ordinance was passed on August 19, 1645, for the setting up of Presbyterian government as the national form of religion. The parish churches of London, one hundred and thirty-seven in number, were to be arranged in twelve classes, the Chapel of the Rolls, the two Serjeants' Inns, and the four Inns of Court together making up the thirteenth. For the country at large county committees were to map out classical districts, the several classes as approved by Parliament to have power to constitute congregational elderships. These elderships corresponding to the Kirk session of the Scottish Church were to meet

once a week, the classes corresponding to the presbytery once a month, the provincial synod twice a year, and the National Assembly to meet in session as summoned by Parliament and not otherwise. By a second parliamentary ordinance dated March 14, 1646, it was commanded that a choice of elders be made forthwith throughout the kingdom of England and dominion of Wales, in their respective churches and chapels. Thus, so far as legislation was concerned, but no further, the new presbyterian system was ready to become an actual reality in the national life.

The system of Church government thus made absolute by ordinance of Parliament was sufficiently rigid. Its basis was, of course, parochial. Every parishioner living within a given area was required to take his place in the parochial organisation and submit to the parochial authorities. Every parish congregation was to choose its representative to sit in the Provincial or National Assembly, and no ecclesiastical community except that of the parish was to be allowed to exist. This was altogether too narrow for some who had been fighting for freedom as against King and prelate; and Oliver Cromwell obtained an Order from the House that an endeavour should be made to find some way how far 'tender consciences who cannot in all things submit to the common rule which shall be established, may be

borne with according to the Word and as may stand with the public peace.' Baillie, one of the Scottish commissioners, writes: 'This order presentlie gave us the alarm. We saw it was a toleration of the Independents by Act of Parliament before the Presbytery was established.' However, when the matter came up again, on report of committee, Cromwell's proposal to consider tender consciences was negatived without division. This was on the 6th of January, 1645, and on the 13th the House gave its assent to the ordinary presbyterian system by a resolution that parochial congregations should be combined in groups under presbyteries.

The independents still protested on behalf of a freer system, and Jeremiah Burroughs, one of their number, gave voice to their feeling in a sermon preached before the Lords in Westminster Abbey. It saddened his heart, he said, that those who not long since were crying to heaven for deliverance should now rise up to oppose a forbearance of their brethren who, together with them, love Jesus Christ, and agree with them in the substance of worship and the doctrinal part of religion. Votes in Parliament may have their value, but the power that rightly influences conscience is light from the Word. 'To use force upon people,' he went on to say, 'before they have means to teach them is to seek to beat the nail of authority without making way by the wimble

of instruction. If you have to deal with rotten or sappy wood the hammer only may make the nail enter presently, but if you meet with sound wood, with heart of oak, though the hammer and hand that strike be strong, yet the nail will hardly go in. It will turn crooked or break....Consider you have to deal with English consciences; there is no country so famous for firm strong oaks as England. You will find English consciences to be so.'

These words were clear and strong, and they were backed up immediately by irresistible facts. For on the 15th of June, 1646, the battle of Naseby was fought and won by the independents, by Cromwell and the army of the New Model—the army which he had reorganised by filling its ranks with men of godly principles and earnest purpose. And when they had won that decisive victory, he maintained on their behalf that they were entitled to the fruits of victory in the shape of religious freedom. Writing to the Speaker of the House of Commons from the field of battle, to announce the great news of the day, Cromwell said: 'Honest men served you faithfully in this action. Sir, they are trusty; I beseech you in the name of God not to discourage them. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience, and you for the liberty he fights for.'

But the time of larger religious freedom was not

yet. The battle of Naseby was fought on the 15th of June, 1646, and on the 22nd of May, 1647, a London crowd was gathered round a fire kindled in front of the Royal Exchange, to see the sheriffs of London and Middlesex burn a petition which had been circulated in the city for signature, and had given great offence to Parliament. It was a petition in favour of religious freedom, desiring that no man might be punished or persecuted as heretical, by judges that are not infallible, for preaching or publishing his opinions in a peaceable way. For, upon pretence of suppressing errors, sects and schisms, the most necessary truths and sincere professions thereof may be suppressed. This petition being brought to the notice of the House of Commons was by resolution ordered to be burnt, and some of those who had signed it were sent to gaol. There was clearly no hope of larger liberty from Parliament, for there the men who were opposed to religious toleration were steadily gaining the upper hand. 'To let men serve God according to the persuasion of their own consciences,' wrote a presbyterian divine, 'was to cast out one devil that seven worse might enter.' 'We detest and abhor the much endeavoured toleration,' declared a meeting of the London ministers. On the 2nd of September, 1646, an ordinance for the suppression of blasphemy and heresy was introduced into the House of Commons which actually went the length of proposing that any

denial of the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation should be punished by death, whilst denial of other less important doctrines such as those relating to presbyterian government and Infant Baptism should be punished with imprisonment for life. This atrocious ordinance was actually read twice in the House of Commons without a division and sent before a committee of the whole House, and the Journals of the House remain to testify the fact [C.J. IV. 659]. The Lords also drew up an ordinance forbidding all who were not ordained ministers 'to preach or expound the Scriptures in any church or chapel, or in any other place.' On the 31st of December, 1646, this ordinance was sent down to the Commons. The independents, knowing there was no hope of their getting the measure rejected, sought merely to amend it, so far at least as to allow laymen to expound the Scriptures. Long and stormy was the debate which followed and when the division came on, Cromwell himself acting as one of the tellers, he and his party were defeated by 105 to 57. A further motion to restrict the prohibition to places 'appointed for public worship,' was defeated without a division.

It is at this point in the history we come upon the line of division between the presbyterians and the independents. The Scots army finding that the King never really meant to accept presbyterianism prepared to leave the country. By the 11th of

February every garrison had been delivered up, every Scottish soldier had recrossed the Tweed, and the King's person had been left in charge of the Parliamentary Commissioners and a guard of cavalry at Holmby House. Still, before his arrival there, a number of presbyterian peers had agreed with him to accept certain concessions he was prepared to make as the basis of an agreement, upon the completion of which Charles was to be restored to Crown and Kingdom. It was the beginning of an alliance between the presbyterians and the royalists which thirteen years later was to bring about the Restoration of the Monarchy and the Church. It was also the widening of the divergence between presbyterian and independent, for if the concessions proposed were admitted, it would mean the surrender of everything for which the independents had been contending since the war began. But now, the army being disbanded, they were powerless to resist. For all the general officers of the 'New Model,' except Fairfax, were to be dismissed; and no Member of Parliament could hold a commission in the new army, or any officer be employed, who did not conform to the presbyterian discipline. But while great changes were made, and the army was no longer on a war footing, 4000 of the soldiers of the 'New Model' were retained in England, having their quarters at Saffron Walden. At this juncture these became restive and defiant, and when

Cornet Joyce, with 500 mounted troopers, rode over to Holmby House and took possession of the King's person, the situation was vitally changed.

What happened after this can only be briefly summarised. The execution of the King in 1649 was followed by a declaration of Parliament that 'England shall henceforth be governed as a Commonwealth or Free State, by a supreme authority of this nation, the representatives of the people in Parliament.' But the Parliament thus taking to itself supreme power had really ceased to be representative of the national will. By the expulsion of royalist members during the war and of presbyterians in 1648 it had, as Cromwell said, been 'winnowed and sifted and brought to a handfull.' When first elected in 1640 it consisted of 490 members; in January, 1649, there were not more than ninety. Four counties, Lancashire being one of them, had no representatives at all; Wales had only three and London one. Yet, though it was thus only a mere remnant of its former self, this Parliament continued to sit on, and sat all the year round; and moreover, by an Act passed in 1641, it could not be adjourned, prorogued or dissolved except by its own consent. In 1653 it was discussing a Bill providing for its own continuance, and for still retaining in its own hands both legislative and executive power, when Cromwell hurried down to the House, and by an act of revo-

lutionary violence dismissed this which has been described as once the most powerful Parliament ever known in England.

But now the urgent question was what should take its place. After much discussion, and not a little disagreement, Cromwell and the council of the army decided to call a Parliament of puritan notables, the congregational churches of the various counties being invited to send up the names of persons fit to be members, from which a selection might be made. Eventually the list included 160 persons. There was no pretence of election, and the assembly thus formed came to be known as the Little Parliament of 1653, and sometimes, by way of ridicule, as Barebone's Parliament, from the name of one of its members. But though thus made the butt of ridicule on the part of cavaliers, it contained not a few distinguished and capable men and did not a little useful work. It abolished the Court of Chancery, where 23,000 cases of from five to thirty years' standing were lying undetermined. It established civil marriages and provided for the registration of births, marriages and burials; and a committee was also appointed to codify the law. But reforms, as these men found full soon, create enemies, and though they were entitled to sit till 1654, by the end of 1653 they abdicated their places and surrendered their powers into the hands of Cromwell as Protector of the Commonwealth.

After being solemnly installed on December 16, 1653, according to the 'Instrument of Government' he and his council were empowered to issue ordinances having the force of law 'until order shall be taken in Parliament concerning them,' the first triennial Parliament to meet in September, 1654. Cromwell took full advantage of this his opportunity, and the nine months when he was thus practically absolute have been described as the really creative period of his government. He issued eighty-two ordinances, nearly all of which were confirmed in 1656 by his second Parliament. Those of them most characteristic of his domestic policy are the three divisions bearing upon the reform of the law, the reformation of manners and the reorganisation of the National Church. His purpose was, as he said, to make the laws of man 'conformable to the just and righteous laws of God.' Some English laws, he told Parliament, were 'wicked and abominable laws, and he protested against hanging a man for six and eightpence:' 'to see men lose their lives for petty matters is a thing God will reckon.'

In the reformation of manners Parliament went faster than they carried public opinion with them; and Cromwell's major-generals by peremptory harshness made puritan legislation to be spoken of as puritan tyranny. The observance of the Sabbath, for example, was enforced not merely to the extent

of closing shops and stoppage of manufacture, but so far as to put an end to all travelling on that day except in cases of necessity attested by certificate from a justice of the peace; and persons 'vainly and profanely walking on the day aforesaid' were to be punished. These major-generals, while looking to the maintenance of order, were to control the local authorities, put down horse-races, bear-baitings and cockfights, to expel vagrants, close unnecessary ale-houses, cause drunkenness to be duly punished, and even report to the council all justices who were negligent in discharging the duties of their office. It is on record that ale-houses were closed by the hundred; and beggars, idlers and debauched persons were arrested in such numbers that the authorities were at a loss where to imprison them, and called for wholesale transportation. Many things they did which were in the interest of morality and public order, but, unfortunately, were too often done in a way to create deep discontent and rouse a storm of opposition.

Still it must not be forgotten that, while seeking to reform the morals of the nation by process of law, Cromwell really laid more stress on the influence of education and religion. When making an educational grant for Scotland he declared that it was 'a duty not only to have the Gospel set up, but schools for children erected and maintained therefor.' Milton,

too, advocated the foundation of schools in all parts of the nation; and Harrington in his *Oceana* (1656) asserted that the formation of future citizens by means of a system of free schools was one of the chief duties of a republic. In 1651 Cromwell strongly urged the endowment in the north of a school or college for all the sciences and literature out of the property of the dean and chapter of Durham.

It need not be said that he was also as solicitous about the religion of the nation as for the education of its citizens. These were not for him two questions but only two sides of one question, that of the elevation of the people. Dealing with this it was found necessary to reorganise the system of the National Church. For though the presbyterian discipline had been established by Parliament, the ecclesiastical condition was far from working smoothly. It was found out then, not for the first time or the last, that it is one thing to create a constitution by Parliament and quite another to make it a vital part of the nation's life. The minutes of the provincial assemblies make it only too clear that a form of church government, accepted under constraint and unwillingly, went heavily on its way. There was opposition and, what was perhaps worse, there was indifference on the part of a large body of the laity. In January, 1648, the London synod reported that

four out of the twelve classes appointed by Parliament had not yet been formed and therefore had sent no delegates. And even four years later, in 1652, in an appeal made by the provincial assembly fears were expressed of 'the utter dissolution of presbyterian government.' There was greater difficulty still with the parochial elderships. It was reported from St Matthew's, Friday Street, that 'the minister hath endeavoured to get elders chosen, but cannot move his parishioners to it'; and from St Peter's, Paul's Wharf, also, 'that the people cannot be induced to choose elders, nor to have a minister that may act with the Government.' In many other places also through the country there were churches which declined to elect elders and set up discipline. In Lancashire the presbyterian system obtained more widely than elsewhere, yet even there its efficient working was in many places hampered either by indifference or open hostility. Adam Martindale tells us that in his own parish of Gorton the system could not be worked because some were against ruling elders as unscriptural and strangers in antiquity, while divers were downright for the congregational way, and yet others did not like to be under the power of ruling elders who might have been chosen at some place ten miles away from them.

The case being so, it was no easy task to which

Cromwell put his hand when in 1654 he and his council proceeded to reorganise the National Church system. Men like Milton and Sir Harry Vane were opposed to a State Church altogether. The magistrates, Milton contended, had no coercive power at all in matters of religion. It was not his business 'to settle religion,' to use the current phrase, 'by appointing either what we shall believe in divine things or practice in religion.' On the other hand, the framers of the 'Instrument of Government' were invincibly opposed to the voluntary system. All therefore that Cromwell and his council could do in the way of ecclesiastical organisation was to determine in what way the ministers of the National Church should be appointed or dismissed, how far restrained in their teaching, and from what sources they should be paid. The State, then, had nothing to say as to forms of ordination, or even whether there was to be ordination at all. All that it concerned itself with when a minister appeared before them was, as to whether he had a right to maintenance as secured to ministers under certain conditions laid down by law. This was to be determined by a body of commissioners, known as Triers, consisting of ministers and laymen who might content themselves with requiring the certificate of three persons testifying to the holy and good conversation of the person to be admitted to the benefice. The right of

the patron to present to the benefice remained intact and unchallenged. All that the Triers could do was to see that he did not present an unfit person. In the State Church system thus reconstructed in 1654 there was no one recognised form of ecclesiastical organisation, and therefore no mention made by name either of episcopacy, presbyterianism or independency. There were no Church courts, no Church assemblies, no Church laws or ordinances. Nothing was said about rites and ceremonies, nothing even about sacraments. The mode of administering the Lord's Supper and baptism was left an open question to be determined by each congregation for itself. It was further provided that if there were churches that preferred to worship outside the national system altogether they were at liberty to do so. The Articles of Government declared that such persons 'shall not be restrained, but shall be protected in the profession of the faith and exercise of their religion, so as they abuse not their liberty to the civil injury of others, and to the actual disturbance of the public peace on their part.' Of course it must be admitted that the liberty was 'not to extend to popery or prelacy;' but on this point, Dr Rawson Gardiner, an ideally fair-minded historian, has this to say: 'With the exception of the condemnation of the use of the Common Prayer, the scheme was in the highest sense broad and generous; and it is well to remember that

those who strove to reserve the use of the Common Prayer were a political as well as an ecclesiastical party, and that the weight and activity of that party, except so far as it appealed to the indifferent in religion, were out of all proportion to its numbers.'

In his National Church settlement Cromwell seems honestly to have aimed at bringing about a real union of tolerance and comprehension. How far his experiment might have succeeded had longer time been granted to it can only be left to conjecture. But the requisite conditions depended on the continuance of his own life. He was the one strong man in the nation, the only one able to control and combine the conflicting elements of the time, and he was not suffered to continue. Prodigal of his great soul, he had, in the high places of the war and in the strenuous work of government, lavishly spent his vital force till, old before his time, he passed away on the 3rd of September, 1658.

When Cromwell fell the rule of the puritan fell with him. The sceptre of sovereignty having passed to feebler hands, conflicting forces, both religious and political, which had been held in check, now rose in tumult, and confusion reigned supreme. But while hostility to puritanism on the part of some of the people was one of the forces which brought about the downfall of the Commonwealth, it was not the

only one, nor the one that was strongest. Sir Henry Vane attacked the validity of Richard Cromwell's title, and made alliance with the army against him, yet there was no more fervent puritan than Sir Henry Vane. The presbyterians, again, formed the great body of the puritan party; they far outnumbered the independents, and it was by their action, and theirs alone, that the Solemn League and Covenant was enforced upon the English people; yet the restoration of the monarchy was mainly brought about by the presbyterians. They supposed that Charles II meant what he said when in his declaration from Breda he promised that liberty should be secured to tender consciences; and, with a credulity at which one can only wonder, they believed in 1659 as they had believed in 1649 that they could secure his consent to the national establishment of the presbyterian system of Church government. They had always been adherents of monarchy, and the Convention Parliament which succeeded the Long Parliament, and by which the King was restored, was half of it presbyterian.

It was not only, nor mainly, dislike of puritanism that brought about the counter-revolution of 1660. There was the weariness resulting from incessant change and uncertainty; there was the deep-seated love of monarchical government in the heart of the English people; there was the revulsion of feeling

brought about by the beheading of King Charles I, for it may be truly said that the execution of the King brought back the King, it made men forget his misdeeds and invested him with the sanctity of a martyr—these and other forces of political sort combined together to bring down the Commonwealth. When that came down puritanism, which had gone out of power when the army was disbanded, came down with it. So far as its influence in the State was concerned, an influence which at one time had been paramount, its fall was as sudden, complete and overwhelming as its triumph had been rapid and surprising. When it held the reins of government, it made the rulers of Europe not only to respect England but to fear her. And then the wheel went full cycle round. Those of its leaders who escaped death, exile and imprisonment had to undergo proscription, and fell into obscurity. Men who had been pillars of the State, victorious in war, and conspicuous in the eyes of the civilized world were deprived of the most elementary rights of citizenship. Triumphant puritans became helpless and persecuted nonconformists. Puritanism passed through more than a quarter of a century of cruel oppression and suffering, but there is often a soul of good in things evil, and that time of relentless persecution created sacred traditions which have borne fruit in consecrated lives. Puritanism, rightly looked

at, is not a thing of one time but for all time. It stands for the supremacy of the will of heaven against the passions and clamours of earth. Its defect has too often been that it gave too narrow an interpretation of what really is the will of heaven. The principles at the heart of it—obedience and righteousness—are the binding forces without which society would go to pieces; but while recognising the value of these it failed, at least many of its followers failed, to recognise also the value of the more graceful and genial elements of human life, without which its glory and blessedness are not complete.

But while thus much may be conceded, it must at the same time be contended that the men of the Commonwealth were by no means the harsh and narrow-minded fanatics, looking grimly upon all fair and pleasant things in life, which cavalier writers have sought to make them appear. Cromwell certainly condemned no innocent pleasures. He himself hunted, hawked and played the games of the time as did the royalist country gentlemen who were his neighbours, and had as real a love for a fine horse as they. One of his contemporaries tells us that he was 'a great lover of music and entertained the most skilful in that science in his pay and family,' and that when he gave a banquet to foreign ambassadors 'rare music both of instruments and voices' was one

of the features of the entertainment. To his credit, too, in matters of art it must be remembered that he saved the cartoons of Raphael and the 'Triumph' of Mantegna for the nation, whereas in later years Charles II tried to sell them to the King of France. Milton, again, his Latin secretary, no man can call a narrow-minded fanatic, but rather a man of loftiest genius whose 'soul was like a star and dwelt apart,' a poet having a voice 'whose sound was like the sea: pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free.' And turning from Cromwell and Milton, we may recall the picture of Colonel Hutchinson, the governor of Nottingham Castle, as given to us by his puritan wife. While 'his faith being established in the truth he was full of love to God and all His saints,' not less than any of his royalist neighbours was he graced with the ordinary accomplishments of life, 'had skill in fencing such as became a gentleman, great love of music, playing masterly on the viol, and had great judgement in paintings, gravings, sculpture, and all liberal arts, and had many curiosities in all kinds.'

It is admitted that the puritans were averse to dramatic representations and hostile to the stage. The reason for this Kingsley has given us. He has shewn that, with the exception of Shakespeare, it was the custom of the comedies of the seventeenth century to introduce adultery as a subject for

laughter, and often as the staple of the whole plot, the seducer being let pass as a 'handsome gentleman' and the injured husband made the object of every kind of scorn and ridicule. And he thinks that most people nowadays will surely 'agree with the puritans that adultery is not a subject for comedy. It may be for tragedy, but for comedy, never.'

To this question of puritanism, then, as to so many others, there are two sides, one of serious estimate, and another of burlesque and travesty. And time tries both. Puritan institutions in the seventeenth century fell with Cromwell, but puritan ideas did not fall with the institutions in which they had been embodied. They had done a great and permanent work in the sacred cause of liberty. The puritans arrested the growth of absolute government in England, a growth which had made rapid advance under the personal government of the Tudors and was fatally proceeding under the Stuart kings who succeeded them. And what made it the more dangerous was that it had succeeded among the other nations of Europe. As we have already seen, absolute monarchies had everywhere else risen on the ruins of national liberties, so that a man could rise in Parliament in 1625 and declare that the English were the last people in Christendom that maintained their rights. How long might they be able to say they

were doing so? It was the turning-point of national destiny, and it was puritanism that came to the rescue. The situation demanded that religious enthusiasm should go hand in hand with the love of liberty, to resist the encroachments of the Prince. It has been truly said that puritan zeal turned the scale in the conflict between divine right and parliamentary authority. So that if puritanism fell, it fell in the hour of victory. The Stuart kings came back, but there did not come back with them the Star Chamber, or the Court of High Commission, or ship-money or forced loans and benevolences. The battle of constitutional liberty had been fought and won.

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